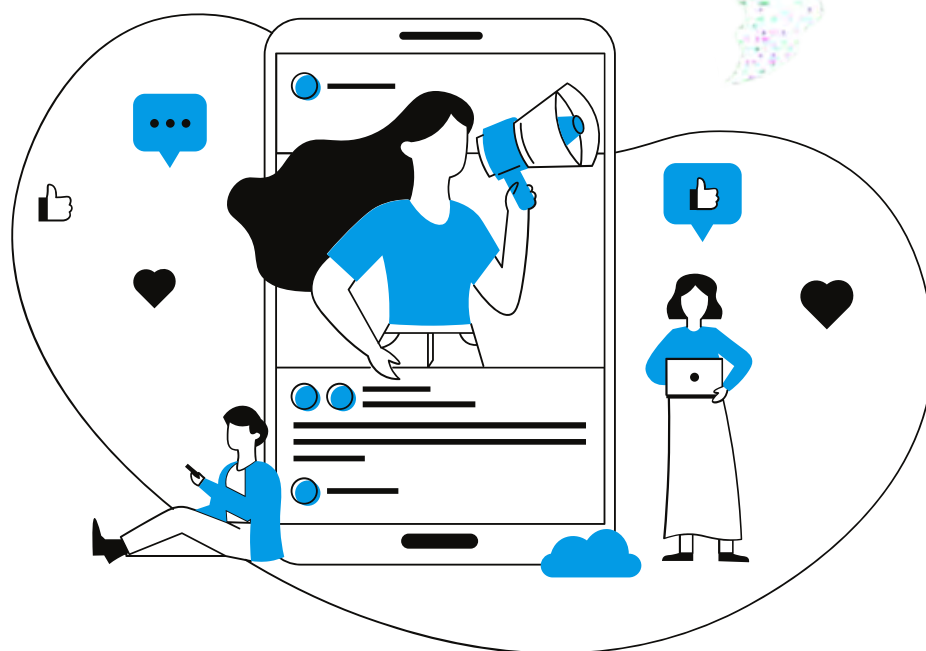


**ULTIMATE GUIDE TO START YOUR IMPACTFUL STORYTELLING CAMPAIGN**

# STORYTELLING HANDBOOK FOR YOUNG ACTIVISTS



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Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union

**AKTIV UNGDOM**

# About Storytelling Handbook for Young Activists

**The Storytelling Handbook for Young Activists** is an outcome of a long effort of experts from *Norway, Bulgaria, Romania, and Sweden*. It has been created as a practical guide for you and your fellow young activists all over the world to express your opinions and ideas on social issues you care about. Also this handbook will help you to find the right storytelling techniques and to tell powerful stories to influence decision-makers who has impact on your future with their actions.

The handbook includes storytelling techniques, methods, tools, exercises which will assist you to: identify impactful personal stories/motivational stories; advocacy/communication campaigns; collect relevant and powerful stories of other people that could be used in your campaigns; identify and use the right storytelling techniques and approach for the campaigns, understand how transmedia storytelling works, and when and how visual storytelling should be used; plan the storytelling campaigns, using tools like Storytelling canvas or the design thinking process; plan the stories/the presentations using tools like the story map, storyboard, story script, etc.; identify and use appropriate ICT and digital skills for the storytelling campaigns, learning also methods that involve augmented, virtual or mixed reality or interactive storytelling techniques.

The handbook also includes examples of successful storytelling campaigns put in practice by others even with small resources.

Each chapter consist of informative part explaining different storytelling techniques and methods, followed by missions in which you practice these techniques and methods interactively. You also find mission hints in each practice to give you ideas about how to complete the missions, while story wizard reminds you improtant considerations about the tasks in the mission.

There are many storytelling manuals and handbooks, but very few of them is specifically designed for active youths like you.

Beside being a guide for young activists, if you are working with other young people, this handbook can be handy as an educational guide to provide inspirations and competences to: a) support young people to influence policy-makers, decision-makers, CSOs, and other relevant stakeholders; b) support young people to develop some MIL competencies; c) engage with media & other info providers for self-expression & democratic participation; d) communicate decisions, ideas, opinions and new understanding using appropriate ITC; e) use of ICT/digital skills for information processing and for generating own content.

The Storytelling handbook for young activists has been created and designed by [Norsensus Mediaforum](#) (Norway), [Fundatia Danis](#) (Romania), [ARC FUND](#) (Bulgaria), and [Awesome People](#) (Sweden) in the frame of MILagers project. The project is co-funded by the European Commission through the Erasmus+ Programme and the national agency of the programme in Norway [Aktiv Ungdom](#). The book can be used for free for non-commercial educational purposes. You can contact handbook authors from [MILagers website](#) (milagers.org) for your questions on how to use or adapt the handbook for other groups of learners.



#### ***Disclaimer:***

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# How to develop personal stories

Paula Beudean

**FUNDAȚIA DANIS**  
pentru Dezvoltare Managerială

## What can you find in this chapter?

Explore personal storytelling power and use this power to build impactful messages for advocacy campaigns that you want to start, join, or support. Learn how to develop your personal stories, what elements to include, and how to connect your personal stories to a more abstract message of an advocacy campaign. Throughout this chapter, you will:

- *Understand why personal storytelling is so powerful in changing people's mind and move them into action;*
- *Develop storytelling skills for creating and structuring your personal stories;*
- *Know how to connect your values, interests, and motivations to social or civic issues to tell more compelling stories to diverse audiences.*

Start with reading about the basics of personal storytelling, then challenge yourself with the missions we designed for you to practice the new knowledge, and finally read more about personal storytelling, the power of stories, and how to make them stick in the mind of the audience, and about personal storytelling for advocacy.

## The basics of personal storytelling

By now, you know that when you want to change people's minds and move them into action for a cause you believe in, you can use the power of stories. The stories have this "dramatic code" that is "an artistic description of how a person can grow or evolve" and which is "embedded deep in the human psyche" (Truby, 2008, Kindle Loc. 85-87). Each powerful story has this code hidden behind the characters, challenges, actions of the story. This is the message that your audience ultimately takes from your stories. It is the message that reaches their mind and makes them think or act in a certain way, hopefully as you intended when you developed the story.

# How to build powerful and motivational personal stories

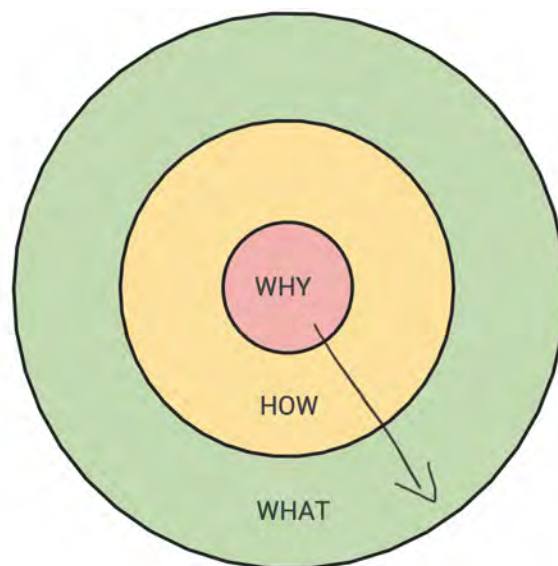
While stories are considered to be powerful, motivational, successful in any communication or advocacy campaigns, it is also proven that personal stories are even more powerful. Listening to stories of people directly affected by a problem or of those who initiated the campaign is more powerful than learning from more general or more abstract stories.

Imagine that you are invited to be the ambassador of an organization that prevents drug abuse among young people. While accepting this challenge, to talk about this organization's cause in front of an audience who could support the organization's programs, you learn about diverse life experiences showing how drugs destroy young people's health and life and push some of them into committing suicide. Telling one or two of these stories to your audience will be decisive. However, trying to connect your personal story to their stories will be even more powerful. It will show the path that the audience might also take in connecting with these stories and move them into supporting the organization.

How can you do that? Think about the things you might have in common with one of the young people who abused drugs for many years, and at one point, feeling lost completely and disconnected from families and friends, he/she decides to commit suicide. It might be that you are of similar age to this young person. Reflect on your daily activities and struggles, and think of them compared to his/her struggles and dark thoughts. While you might be dreaming of finishing school, getting a job, planning a trip with friends, he/she thinks of taking his/her life. Show the audience how this comparison makes you feel, and ask the audience to remember their struggles and dreams as young people. Nobody should have such struggles, and

definitely, all young people should plan their future and not their death. This could be a way to connect your personal story, beliefs, and motivations to a cause. Empathize and find those moments, people, things, challenges in your life that can be genuinely connected to the problem you want to solve in your community.

In developing a personal story that sticks, you may also use The Golden Circle tool to help you express your ideas and solutions more effectively. The Golden Circle is an efficient, relevant, easy to understand the instrument, and Simon Sinek - its creator - is very charismatic in presenting how great leaders, like Martin Luther King, and great brands choose to communicate their missions, their dreams, their vision for the future. You may watch the full TEDx speech of Simon Sinek here: [Youtube Link](#)



Shortly, Sinek says that usually, we tend to present things we care about, ideas, thoughts, or commercials, from outside to inside - from what we do to why we do it. This is actually the best-case scenario, in which we remember to talk about the “why”, our beliefs, our values, the reasons behind our decisions, etc. But then, what he observed in his research is that influential people, great leaders start to communicate their ideas from the inside circle to the outside circle: from “why” they are doing things to “what” they are proposing for the dreams/ideas to happen. Simon Sinek

says that these circles match entirely how our brain is structured. The “what” circle is our “neocortex” - where rational thinking and language, and figures and abstract things are processed and understood. The “how” and “why” circles represent the brain’s limbic part responsible for feelings, behavior, and decision-making. So if we start from the “why”, we will get directly at the people's feelings and ability to make decisions.

## How to tell stories about yourself

Now that you saw how you can connect your story to a cause you want to support and how you can create powerful messages, let’s see what the key elements of a personal story are. According to John Truby (2008), in order to embed that “dramatic code” in your story, you need to think of elements such as:

- *Any story has a main character. As this is a story about yourself, the main character is you or you as a part of a relevant group that becomes the main character of the story. Also, around you might be other characters that give you specific challenges or support you on the way.*
- *You need a theme or a moral argument. This is what the audience learns from the story, how they should act and react according to the “moral vision” you set up with your story.*
- *You will create a story world in which you act as the main character. Put your story in a context to which the audience can relate, and they can easily imagine how it is to be in your world.*
- *You also need a plot. As the main character, you need a challenge to take on your own or ask for support from your audience to overcome this challenge.*

- *Once you have the characters, the plot, the story world - you think of all the scenes in your story and which are really relevant to tell your audience. You develop the scene weave of the story.*

However, before starting building your story, you should think first about what your story is. What do you want to tell, and why do you want to tell the story? Basically, you define the premise of the story, “which is your entire story condensed to a single sentence” (Truby, 2008, Kindle Loc. 177). The premise includes the character, the plot, and maybe some information about the story’s resolution. For instance, using the example from above, the premise could be: “This is a story of a young person who cannot accept that while he/she is planning his/her future life, another young person plans his/her death.”

# Increase your personal storytelling powers!

## Create your flash-story!

### The powers gained at the end of this mission:

- *Skills to express a challenge or values concisely, using the flash-story structure.*

### The magic of the Flash-story:

- *The Flash-story or the six-word story helps you learn how to extract the essence of any story and express the challenge and the emotions in very few words.*
- *It gets you to the core of your story and makes it easy to develop the concept and the central message of any story you might want to use for your civic, social, advocacy campaigns.*

### Start your mission here:

Let's warm-up! There is this urban legend that Ernest Hemingway bet with his friends that he would write the shortest novel in the world, and he wrote the following six-word novel: "For sale: baby shoes, never worn". Think about a challenge in your life or your personal values, and write a personal six-word story about them.

## Build powerful personal stories

### The power gained at the end of this mission:

- *Knowledge and practice on the key elements of a personal story;*
- *Skills to build a powerful personal story connected to a cause in which you believe.*

## The magic of personal stories:

- *Personal stories help you reach your audience through emotions and make them easier empathize with the cause you want to advocate for;*
- *Like all good stories, personal stories have a “dramatic code” that helps people grow towards what you would like them to.*

## Start your mission here:

1. Select one cause, one advocacy campaign that you would like to support.  
Imagine that you would have to deliver a three-minute speech to an audience to convince them to join this campaign. How can you develop your speech by connecting the campaign’s message to your personal story?
2. First, develop the premise of your story and write it down on a sheet of paper. Also, reflect and write down the moral argument of your story.
3. Then, use the story map from Chapter 5 to develop the rest of the story, including the character (think of which role/part of your life you want to talk about); the story world/the settings, the plot/the challenge, and the outcome of your story/the resolution.
4. Write your speech and read it to a friend and a group of friends and ask for their feedback. Finally, improve your speech based on the feedback you receive. Here you go! You have your first powerful speech based on a personal story that supports a cause in which you believe!

# The ten life roles and personal storytelling for a cause

## The powers gained at the end of this mission:

- *Ability to identify the values, interests, motivations that help you to connect with a particular cause, initiative, or project;*
- *Ability to use these values, interests, motivations to build authentic and powerful stories that can support a specific cause, initiative, or project.*

## The magic of the ten roles in storytelling:

- *The ten roles exercise, inspired by the tool “Who am I?” developed by Richard N. Bolles, will help you get very fast to your values, interests, and motivations in everything that you do in your personal and professional life;*
- *Once you have identified these values, interests, and motivations, it will be easier for you to find the right stories to tell about yourself or about the causes you want to support.*

## Start your mission here:

1. Take ten big sticky notes or ten blank sheets of color paper. At the top of each paper sheet, write down the question: “Who am I?”. Answer the question by identifying ten relevant roles you currently play in your personal or professional life, such as student, son/daughter, speaker, writer, engineer, etc.
2. Reflect, and answer by writing or drawing each role on a different sheet of paper/sticky note. Also, think about why you chose those roles, why these are important to you, what excites you, what makes you happy about those roles.

**Mission hints:**

*For example, for the “speaker” role, one person may enjoy the attention, recognition, delivery of powerful or motivational speeches, networking; while, for “writer”, one person may enjoy the opportunity for self-expression, creative work, the public recognition, etc.*

3. Prioritize the roles by discussing and deciding which roles are more important to you. Also, think about which roles could be connected or support the cause/the project/the initiative you would like to join, support, or initiate. The most important roles should stay on top, while the less essential roles will go at the bottom of the stack of sheets/sticky notes. Reflect on the things you wrote under each role to identify the common denominators in those ten responses. Write down the common denominators on a separate sheet.

**Mission hints:**

*Using the examples above, the ones of the “writer” and “speaker”, the common denominator would be the “recognition”. These denominators, things that regularly repeat in your most relevant professional or personal roles, represent your core values, likes, interests, motivations. These made you choose those roles or enjoyed those roles in the way in which you described it. These are also the things you might use to support a cause you believe in, join a project, or start a civic initiative. This is the story you can tell about yourself and connect with the initiative.*

4. Finally, think about which of these roles and the denominators you identified you would like to tell about yourself when starting, joining, or supporting a

cause. Make a list of ideas on how you could promote these roles and the denominators in social media while supporting a specific cause.

#### ***Mission hints:***

*Suppose one of the denominators is "sensitivity to injustice" / "be fair". In that case, the stories you will tell for a specific cause will show the injustice done to people by the problem you try to solve and/or promote solutions that deal with this social injustice. Or, if "recognition" is one of the key denominators/values/interests you identified, then the stories you will tell about the cause or the project might be about the saviors, the people that lead the way in solving a specific problem, including you - show why you care about a cause and what you do for that, and invite others to join you in your effort!*

## **Why, How, What Story**

### **The powers gained at the end of this mission:**

- *Knowledge and skills to build a powerful message with impact and relevance for your audience.*

### **The magic of the Golden Circle - Why, How, What:**

- *The Golden Circles helps you organize your story, identify what is relevant to be included in a story and a message you want to tell others;*

- *The Why, How, What structure makes your story/the message powerful and relevant for the others, reaching their hearts and minds.*

### **Start your mission here:**

1. Think about the moment in your life when you were so impressed by a cause, a project, a civic initiative that motivated you to take action, join the project, cause, or talk about it with your friends, willing to do something. What made you get involved? How the cause, the project, the initiative was connected to your own life experience? What made you “click”? Write down the memories, the first ideas of that moment.
2. Now, try to organize your story by following Simon Sinek’s Golden Circle Structure, talking about what motivated you to pursue that specific cause, to join the project, to talk about it with your friends.

#### ***Mission hints:***

*Use the following questions to guide you in developing the story/the message:*

*Why do you believe in the cause? Why is the cause important?*

*Why should people take action?*

*How can this “dream”, expressed in the Why section, can be accomplished? What is the process, how things should be done, how people should react, or how should the responsibility be shared?*

*What are the concrete steps that need to be taken? What should people do?*

#### ***The Storytelling Wizard says:***

*Here is an example of a Why, How, What personal story:*

*"I believe that each child has the right to feel safe at school and never feel afraid of their colleagues. I think that no child should live what I experienced as a child while bullied at school. (WHY)  
Professors and parents should be able to help children to protect themselves and their colleagues from bullying behaviors. (HOW)  
Specific training courses, workshops, tools, and techniques to understand and manage bullying cases, giving support both to the bullying victims and the bullies, at school and at home, should be provided to teachers and parents as well. (WHAT)"*

## Learn more!

- Sinek, S. (2011). Start with Why - How Great Leaders Inspire Everyone to Take Action.
- Truby, J. (2008). The Anatomy of Story: 22 Steps to Becoming a Master Storyteller. Kindle Edition.
- Heath, C. & Heath, D. (2007). Made to Stick: Why Some Ideas Survive, and Others Die.
- Chase, V. (n.d). Your Personal Narrative Affects Everything. Retrieved from <https://www.thestorytellingnonprofit.com/blog/your-personal-narrative-affects-everything/>
- Austin, J. & Connell, E. (2019). Evaluating Personal Narrative Storytelling for Advocacy. A Literature Review Prepared for Living Proof Advocacy. Retrieved from <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5a6fe7f9a8b2b00e82284310/t/5dead06f64f05f2c105f56/1575673556090/LPA-Wilder-FullReport.pdf>
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Fredrik Carl Wouda Wouda - Karin Wouda

AWESOME PEOPLE

# How to collect and present other's stories



## What can you find in this chapter?

Isn't that so that you rather agree with a cause if you hear a personal story you can identify yourself with? A story which does not only move your mind but also moves your heart? MILagers partner in Sweden, for instance, built campaigns on other people's stories such as the solidarity project "To be a person is to be a story" where they collected 100 stories from various people living in the community to reduce prejudices and broaden the perspective of identity (#100storiesorebro). They have also used other people's stories in the gender equality campaign "Sour comments" where women could share their experiences of discriminating comments in the home environment (#surakommentarer). Stories are a powerful tool to create change and, in this chapter, you will discover how you can collect and present other's stories to boost your advocacy campaigns. Learn how to interview people with the right questions to get a good story to boost your message in order to influence friends, family, peers, decision-makers, NGOs, public authorities, other stakeholders from your community by employing powerful tools for:

- *Understanding the importance of active listening before collecting people's stories*
- *Ask meaningful questions to get relevant personal stories for your audience and for the cause you want to promote or problem – to solve.*
- *Structuring your collection of stories and presenting them that can efficiently deliver your message, make sense for your audience, and help you reach the campaign's goals.*

Start with acquiring essential knowledge on active listening, ethic storytelling and how to collect and present other people's stories, then challenge yourself and your

friends with the missions we prepared for you to practice the new information, and finally go and read more about those things you consider the most relevant for your campaigns and your goals.

## Ethical aspects

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*"Because stories are powerful, and because they are wholly owned by the person who shares them, we have an ethical obligation to use story in ways that do no harm. Whether we are asking for stories to better understand an organizational challenge, to use in our organizational communications, or for an advocacy campaign, our goal should be to empower, not exploit."*

- Thaler Pekar, *Ethical storysharing part 1*, 2011

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When collecting stories from other people you have a great responsibility not to exploit them but empower them by sharing their stories. Therefore it is important to be aware of the ethical aspects when you are collecting stories. The basics of ethical storytelling is to give and get informed consent - that is, when a person agrees to tell his/her story with full knowledge of how it will be used and what the known risks are. So be aware that you must explain the use and purpose of the story, such as where and to whom it will be shown, and what effect you hope it will have. The consent must be given voluntarily and with an understanding of whether the storyteller will be anonymous. The teller must understand the implications of sharing the story and be able to comprehend the implications of his/her participation. Relevant ethical questions to ask can be the following (from [Deborah Swerdlow, Ethical storytelling, 2019](#)).

- *Do we have the person's consent to tell their story, for this purpose and in this medium?*
- *Whose needs and desires are at the center of how the story is presented, the person whose story it is or the audience for the story?*
- *Who is the protagonist of the story, the person or our organization? Who is empowered, and who is disempowered?*
- *Are we telling the story in a way that reinforces harmful stereotypes or stigmas about a social issue or the people who are affected by it?*
- *What will happen to the person after we tell their story in this way? Could it cause them harm? Are we going to continue to help them and be in a relationship with them, or are we leaving as soon as we "get what we need?"*

At [www.ethicalstorytelling.com](http://www.ethicalstorytelling.com) there is a pledge on ethical storytelling which can be useful to go through to make sure you will collect and present stories in an ethical way and also useful resources such as media consent form and guidance on the use of victim's images.

## Active listening

Brandon Stanton, founder of Humans of New York, a blog where he publishes photos and stories of everyday people on the streets of New York (now grown to stories and photos from over 20 countries, check it out here

<https://www.humansofnewyork.com/> ) emphasize the importance of active listening when collecting other people's stories. *"Especially in today's age, when everything's about telling your own story, everything's about putting out your own stuff and getting noticed and getting attention—I think the one thing that is in short supply is listening itself."* (Brandon Stanton, cited in Pictures and stories, 2018).

For you to make a good interview and get a good story it is important that you approach the interview as a conversation and for that, you need good listening skills, emotional intelligence, and empathy. You need to be an active listener. Active listening is an active process that requires the listener to fully concentrate, understand, respond and then remember what is being said. You make a conscious effort to hear and understand the complete message being spoken, rather than just passively hearing the message of the speaker. Active listening empowers trust and helps you to get the clear message of the communication. Active listening is also about patience, listeners should not interrupt with questions or comments. Active listening involves giving the other person time to explore their thoughts and feelings, they should be given adequate time for that. To boost your active listening powers, be sure you are paying attention to the person you are interviewing, show the person you are listening to him/her, do not interrupt the person with counter arguments. Only ask for clarifications and more details to show your interest in the story.

When you are doing an interview, try to deepen your self-awareness. How are you reacting to the story? What can you do to remain present and impartial? Have time, don't rush, and afterward have time to process and create the story. Develop your emotional intelligence by being aware of your own emotions and those of the speaker. The mission is to show empathy - the ability to understand other people's feelings as if we were having them ourselves.

## **How to run interviews and ask relevant questions for collecting stories**

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*"When you tell someone else's story, you can give them a window into their own soul"*

No matter your reason for collecting other people's stories, here you have what you need to successfully collect other people's stories. How do you approach people to interview? How can you provide a safe environment for them to tell their story? How should you use questions to get an interesting story?

There are several ways you can collect other people's stories. Depending on your aim of collecting other people's stories you can choose different strategies. The best way is to start where you are with the people around you and ask your community to share their stories. Interview people you already know who may have relevant stories connected to your campaign. If you need stories from more people and you have to approach people you don't know, a good way is to ask each person you are interviewing to recommend three new people to interview. This strategy is especially efficient when you have a specific topic you want to enlighten since it can be hard to find the right people to interview. If you want to make a campaign where the aim is to share different people's stories (such as Humans of New York) it can be better to approach people you don't know in different public places or different gatherings since the other method may lead you to one kind of person. You can also try with open calls for story collection where you state why you want to tell these stories and people can send in stories or give contact information for you to do interviews. It is important to make sure with people you interview that you can share their story.

You have to make sure that when you are interviewing people you create a safe and comfortable environment for the person to share. Let the person decide the place for the interview and if you are interviewing people you don't know in public places, ask where they want to sit down for the interview and ask people if they have time and

avoid approaching people who seem to be in a hurry. Find quiet places where you will not be disturbed, and the person will feel comfortable that no one else will listen in case it is a sensitive topic.

So, you are ready to collect other people's stories but what questions are good to ask? Of course, the stories need to convey the message you want to communicate but you also want people who encounter the stories to feel something. Pick things that everyone can relate to, universal ideas that people will always want to share with others. Ask for memories, perspectives, experiences to get a story from your question instead of only an answer. If you are creating a campaign with a specific cause, invite people to share their experiences with (or without) the "cause" to boost the campaign with testimonials supporting your message. To collect interesting stories, it is good to focus on emotions and "aha-moments" and ask follow-up questions like "what happened?", "how did it make you feel?". Here are some cues on what to focus on:

- *Superlatives*
- *Memories*
- *Perspectives*
- *Experiences*
- *Recall a point in time*
- *Descriptions of a particular significant event or impact*
- *AHA-moments*
- *Questions whose answer is a story*
- *Have you ever...what happened?*

Depending on your aim with bringing other people's stories in your campaign, different questions can be more or less relevant but here are some example of questions that can be useful to get an interesting story for your campaign, if it is about a specific cause or if you just want to collect other people's stories to raise awareness about unity in human kind, that we all share similar hopes, dreams, fears and despair.

- *Can you describe some of your memories of being involved in "cause"?*
- *Can you share your experiences with (or without) the "cause"? What happened?*
- *What was the most memorable hour of your career?*
- *What are you most afraid of?*
- *Which is your most happy moment in your life?*
- *What is your saddest moment in your life?*
- *Who is the most important person in your life?*
- *Tell me about a time...(in life you always will remember)*
- *Tell me about someone you admire and why*
- *Tell me about a place that makes you feel good*
- *Tell me about someone you miss in your life*
- *Tell me about a great event in your life*
- *What did you learn from this experience? Why was this experience important for you?*
- *How have you or people in the story changed?*
- *Tell me about a moment you'll never forget*
- *Tell me about a time you were proud of yourself*
- *Tell me about one of the challenges you've been through*
- *Is there a question that I did not ask you that I should have asked?*

- *If I could bring one of the donors who support this cause and sit them down with you now, what would you say to them, to reassure them that their support is making a difference?*

Vanessa Chase, founder of “The Storytelling non profit” has a list of 25 questions if you want to collect other people’s stories focusing on telling the story of the impact of your NGO which can easily be adapted to your specific campaign. Check it out here: <https://www.thestorytellingnonprofit.com/blog/25-questions-to-ask-to-get-the-story/>

Don’t forget to thank the people who provide stories!

## **How to write/present other’s stories**

So now you have done your preparation with lining into ethical storytelling and active listening. You have also found ways on how to collect stories and which questions to ask to get interesting stories from people. Now comes the last part of how you should write/present other people’s stories. The more you think of this during the interview, the easier your job will be when you write/present the story. One way to structure your writing is to start with the facts of the story and then revisit the facts and add in details. During the interview you can get more details by asking follow-up questions starting with what, why, when, who, where, how etc. such as “what happened then”? End with embedding the emotional experience. During the interview you have to ask questions such as “How did it feel when...?”. For the story to be compelling for the audience there should be some kind of conflict in the story and include emotions such as nostalgia, frustration, anxiety, pride, surprise, amusement, or controversy which are excellent storytelling emotions that make people want to share the story (Addison Duvall, How to tell stories others want to share, 2019). You can present the story in writing but if it is possible, a photo as well as information

about the person will give more credibility and more engagement. A video can be even more engaging. Check out our chapter on visual storytelling for more information!

# Become a super interviewer!

The magic of using other people's stories for your campaigns:

- *Personal stories from people create a context for your message. Instead of only a slogan in your campaign, personal stories will engage the audience and make them understand a wider picture.*
- *Personal stories move people to act since they are emotion driven and emotions backed up by logic is what makes us move or change.*
- *Personal stories create connections and highlight things we all can share and relate to.*

## Practice your active listening skills

### The powers gained at the end of this mission:

- *Active listening, needed to hear the complete message conveyed in the story and to empower trust*

### Start your mission here:

1. Take the mission together with a friend or a group of friends.
2. Train yourselves to be active listeners with the following exercises. Be in pairs and let one person in each pair tell the other person about a summer memory (or similar). The other person should act very uninterested in what the other person is saying. After two minutes, change roles. Talk in the group how it felt when you were not listened to and when you had to be the one not listening.

3. This time in pairs one will describe a holiday destination without mentioning what destination s/he is talking about. The person listening must practice active listening skills – listening attentively to what is being said and what is not quite being said - without interrupting the person who talks. After 2 mins the listener must summarize the three or four main issues or criteria that they have heard the talker express and then make a guess of the destination. Then swap roles and repeat. After the pairs have had both roles, discuss in the group how it felt and summarize things that are needed for active listening.

## Practice your interviewer skills

### The powers gained at the end of this mission:

- *Knowledge and practice of asking the right questions to collect interesting stories.*

### Start your mission here:

1. Take the mission together with a friend or a group of friends. You should select one cause you would like to develop a campaign for and boost it with personal stories.

#### ***The Storytelling Wizard says:***

*Do not spend too much time choosing the topic, this is only an exercise to understand how you can collect other people's stories to boost your campaign.*

### ***Mission hints:***

*Since this mission is focusing on collecting other people's stories it can be good to choose something relevant for you and your group of friends so the stories you will collect from each other are relevant for the cause.*

2. Choose 3-5 questions from the "Example of questions" above and in pairs decide who will be the first person interviewing the other person. Find a good place for the interview and be aware of what is needed for ethical storytelling.
3. Practice to outline facts, details and emotions from the story shared in order to have a compelling story by asking follow-up questions.

## **Present other's stories**

### **The powers gained at the end of this mission:**

- *Knowledge and practice of the whole process of collecting other people's stories and presenting them digitally*

### **Start your mission here:**

1. Take the mission individually or with friends. Select a topic for a campaign you would like to develop and boost it with personal stories.

### ***The Storytelling Wizard says:***

*Decide on a topic you are passionate about for you to get motivation to talk to strangers since it is not the easiest thing to do.*

**Mission hints:**

*Don't forget the ethical part of collecting stories, making sure the person you are interviewing has given his/her consent and knows how you will use the story.*

2. Choose 3-5 questions from the “Example of questions” above and collect 3-4 stories from people you don't know. You can ask people at public places or start with a person who then gives you three other people to interview.
3. Make sure to structure the story while you are interviewing so you have the facts, the details and the emotions so it will be a compelling story.
4. Transcribe the interview and put the story together so it will not be too long.
5. Use a digital tool such as Canva ([www.canva.com](http://www.canva.com)) and put everything together. Picture, name of the interviewed person and story. Make sure the picture and text is 50/50 in size at least so you don't use a too small picture and too much text.

**The storytelling wizard says:**

*To help you with the structure of the story, you can use a story map which helps you gain a clear image of how you should start thinking and planning the story. You can see chapter 5 to get more information about story map. If you are going to have a photo connected to the story, try to take a photo which will represent the story. For example if it is a sad story, don't have a laughing person*

*in the photo. Try to capture the feeling of the story. Check how different angles can give different feelings for the photo and the story such as taking from below will give the feeling that the person is powerful, taking from above will give the feeling the person is subordinate.*

## Learn more:

Ibrisevic, Ilma (2018) Donorbox Nonprofit blog. *The Ultimate Guide to Nonprofit Storytelling (30+ Tips)*. Retrieved from <https://donorbox.org/nonprofit-blog/nonprofit-storytelling-guide/>

Duvall, Addison (2019) Hongkiat. *How to Tell Stories Others Want to Share*. retrieved from <https://www.hongkiat.com/blog/tell-stories-others-want-to-share/>

Pekar, Thaler (2011) Philanthropy News Digest. *Ethical Storysharing, Part 1* retrieved from <https://pndblog.typepad.com/pndblog/2011/04/ethical-storysharing-part-1.html>

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Swerdlow, Deborah (2019) Idealist. *Ethical Storytelling Communication Without Exploitation*. Retrieved from <https://www.idealists.org/en/careers/ethical-storytelling>

Taylor, Alison (2018) Pictures & Stories. *The power of listening: An interview with Humans of New York's Brandon Stanton*. Retrieved from <https://www.picturesandstories.com/news/2018/2/22/the-power-of-listening-an-interview-with-humans-of-new-yorks-brandon-stanton>

The GLS project (2020). *7 Targeted Active Listening Games, Exercises and Activities for Adults*. Retrieved from <https://www.goodlisteningkills.org/active-listening-games-exercises-activities/>

Training zone (2017). *Trainers' Tips: active listening exercises*. Retrieved from <https://www.trainingzone.co.uk/develop/cpd/trainers-tips-active-listening-exercises>

Working Narratives. *What are the ethics of storytelling?* Retrieved from <https://workingnarratives.org/article/ethics/>

Desislava Asenova Petar Kanchev



# Storytelling techniques and approaches



## What can you find in this chapter?

You are a young person, you have an idea of an advocacy campaign or civic activity that you want to put in real and you would like to know how to make it more engaging for your audience (friends, peers, family, community, etc.) through storytelling? So, sit down and relax because you are in the right place!

In the following chapter, we will provide you with a few tips for telling a story and will familiarize you with the hidden power of different storytelling techniques that can help you structure your story in a way to persuade others of your ideas. We will present eight classical storytelling techniques along with their benefits, why they could work for youth campaigns and a few mission examples for practicing the use of different storytelling techniques.

So, let's begin!

## Telling a story – some tips

We would like to first draw your attention to a few important elements you should consider before choosing the most relevant technique for delivering your story.

Most people can learn to tell stories well, but some may find storytelling so challenging that they prefer to use other approaches. However, if you decide to incorporate a story into your campaign or civic activity, there are some elements that you may consider structuring it around. Here are some of them that have been emphasised by Erica Bagshaw in an article for the Colin James Method organisation in Australia (Bagshaw, E., 2017) and an article on the MasterClass platform (MasterClass, 2020). The elements are: *context, outcome and main message, experience, brevity, and conflict*.

## The Context

The first step when thinking about a story to connect you with your audience is to identify who your audience is and more important - what is the context of your audience. Try to identify the pain points, values, and opinions of your audience, their topics of interest as well as similarities, including any shared experiences. Think about the following questions: *What kind of state is your audience going to be in? Are they resistant to or anxious about the message you want to pass to them? Do they feel excited about it or it should be your story that should raise their interest in the topic?* Answering these questions is important for the success of your story because it will help you pick one that will connect with your audience emotionally and will help you capture their attention in the first few seconds. Take for example speeches of school teachers or principals when congratulating the new alumni – they understand that graduating students will suddenly be faced with making some of life's biggest choices and will be wondering how to make that decision. Therefore, they share their experience of being in the same boat and this helps them connect with their audience.

## The Outcome and Main message

The second important step is to decide what you want to be the outcome of your story (or campaign in general). An engaging story usually progresses towards a central moral or message. If you decide your story to have a strong moral component, you should guide listeners/readers to that message. Furthermore, when you start drafting your story you should have a clear idea of what you are building toward. Do you want to make your audience open their minds, change behavior or think about a problem in another way? Keep in mind the context and the outcome that you are looking for to choose the kind of story you will need and the key action you want the audience to take away. You should ask yourself – what do I want my audience to do or feel?

## Create the experience

Third, before setting the scene at the beginning of your story, take some time to think about how you will put people in the time and place of the setting. Try to bring your audience as close to the real experience as possible. You can use time-specific fashions and music to denote the time, and even use weather and street names to denote a specific place.

## Brevity

Do you like droning stories, filled with too many details, where you hear everything but the point? You probably do not, so do not your audience. Keep in mind that storytime can quickly become pretty boring. So, the fourth step you should keep in mind is to make sure that you keep your story brief – deploying only the essential information, not going into too many details. Think of a clear beginning and end of your story, and then choose the key plot events and include them with bullet points. A general rule of thumb is to only include whatever drives the narrative forward. Remember to cut and keep cutting until you have bare-bones only, which are actually your story.

## Use conflict

Last but not least, keep in mind that most of the time, engaging stories are those that contain some kind of conflict or challenge. These could be people against people, against circumstances, or against nature. To be satisfied with a happy ending, your audience has to watch the main characters struggle to achieve their goals. Also, you learn through conflict, errors, and challenges, so make sure that you include some kind of conflict that your audience is likely to appreciate.

We all know that there are stories that grab our attention and keep it till the end, making us think about it a long time after we have heard it or read it. Presenting your campaigns/civic activities through storytelling is a great way to let your audience know who you are and what you stand for. It could be through this story that you gain their interest in your message/cause and build trust. And it doesn't have to be something spectacular, but to be enough to give them taste, make them want more, and help them remember you.

## Classical storytelling techniques and how to use them to develop and structure your stories

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*"In today's complex and noisy world, the ability to tell a compelling and memorable story that influences others to be genuinely excited about your idea is arguably one of the most important leadership skills to master."*<sup>[1]</sup>

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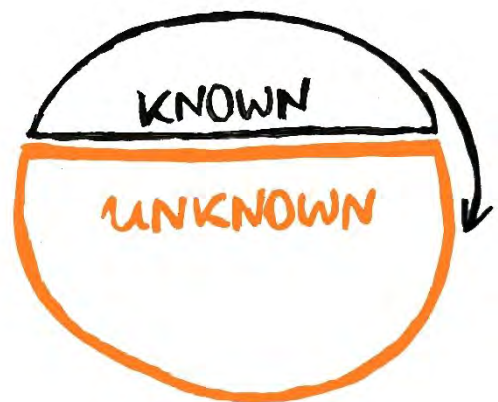
Stories are claimed to be the most effective way of organizing information, it is a powerful form of communication that translates ideas and moves people to action. We do not say we would show you how to become the master of storytelling. But we could at least show you how to use a few classical storytelling techniques to create a story that would take your audience on a journey, leaving them feeling inspired and motivated.

Note: In the following pages we present the storytelling techniques as being listed and summarised in a Sparkol blog post (Sparkol, 2018). We have also used additional supporting information from other sources, all of them listed in the "Additional resources" section. The diagrams and infographics below are self-made by the authors of this chapter and have been inspired by (Wilkerson, A., 2016) and (Blinkoff, A., n.d.).

## STORYTELLING TECHNIQUE 1: MONOMYTH (The Hero's Journey)

Lion King. Finding Nemo. Star Wars. Probably you have watched at least one of these movies. But do you know that all of them represent the application of a very popular storytelling technique known as "the monomyth"? Monomyth (also called *the hero's journey*) was first described by *Joseph Campbell* in his book "*The Hero with a Thousand Faces*", and is a story structure that you can find in many popular dramas, myths, legends, and even religious rituals across the world.

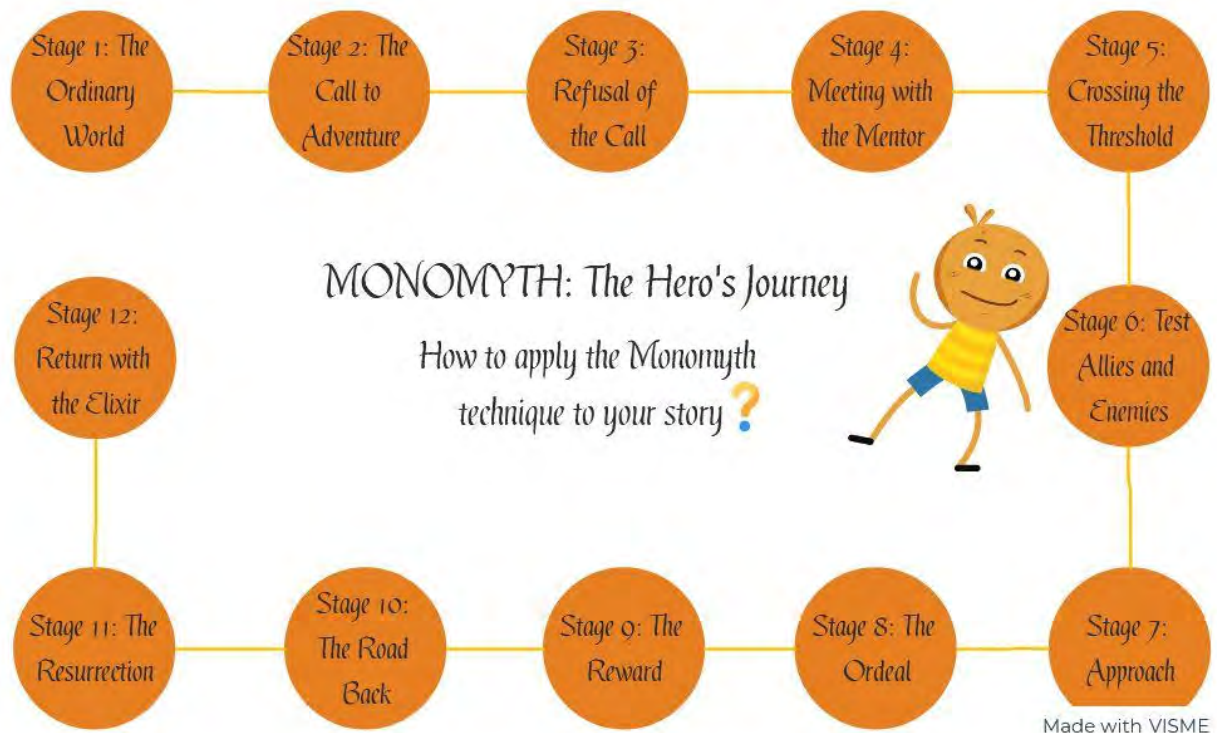
It presents an adventurous and challenging journey of a Hero (it could be you or someone else) who moves from one point (somewhere they known) to another (a threatening unknown place) and returns safely with a reward or newfound wisdom. To put it shortly, the Hero goes on a journey or takes on a challenge and comes back a changed and transformed person.



If you want to show the benefits of braving the unknown in your story, the monomyth is a perfect technique. It would make it easier for you to explain how you obtained the knowledge/ wisdom you want to share with your audience. For example, if you are organising a drugs campaign, you can tell a story of a person who has been addicted to drugs but has decided to take the journey to recovery, spent some time in a rehabilitation center, walked a difficult path, and then returned home recovered and clean from drugs.

The Monomyth storytelling process can also be presented in 12 stages, illustrated on the infographic below. You can check a very informative explanation of the idea of the stages along with relevant examples on the following link:

<https://visme.co/blog/monomyth-heros-journey-infographic-storytelling-tips-presentations/>.



Source: Self-made infographic, VISME

### Benefits:

- *It engages your audience by accessing their imagination and making them a part of the journey.*
- *Illustrates the benefits of risk-taking behavior.*
- *Evokes a sense of empathy.*
- *Emphasises the importance of learning new lessons and gaining wisdom.*

## STORYTELLING TECHNIQUE 2: THE MOUNTAIN

You probably have at least once in your lifetime watched TV series or soap operas whereby the story has an arc that goes over a season. Then, you should be very well familiar with another popular form of storytelling which is called “the mountain”.

The mountain technique works linearly and allows to build tension and drama as head towards the culmination moment of the story and then relieving the tension and coming to an end. Like the shape of a mountain, this technique starts by setting the scene at the bottom of the mountain. As you know, you cannot climb a mountain



straight away in just one leap, but you have to traverse lots of smaller ascends and descends. These represent the series of challenges that you faced and managed to overcome over time, focusing on the progression of drama as it escalates on the way of reaching the top of the mountain which represents the main challenge you want to present in your story. Then, you close the story with a climactic conclusion.

Perhaps you notice that the mountain technique is similar to the monomyth technique. However, what distinguishes them is that the mountain technique has a bit more freedom at the end and it does not necessarily end with a happy ending after the climactic challenge (as is the case with the monomyth).

### Benefits:

- *Focuses on how you overcome a series of challenges.*
- *Keeps the audience curious by building suspense.*

- *Provides satisfying conclusions to make your audience take a desirable action.*

### STORYTELLING TECHNIQUE 3: THE NESTED LOOPS

Nested Loops are the classic way that stories are made more hypnotic. It allows for telling three or more stories in a row, placing the most important one (the core of your message) in the centre, and adding a few stories around it to elaborate or explain your central principle. It is stories within stories within stories... And it works like this: you start telling a story, but before you have completed it you stop and start



another one. Then you tell only a part of the second story and move to a third one. And so on, and so on. This is called opening nested loops. You close the loops later, finishing each of the stories in reverse order – you first finish the last story and then go back and finish the rest with the first story you begin being the last story you finish.

To imagine how the nested loops works, take an example with a friend telling you about a wise person in their life who taught them an important lesson. In this case, the first loops are your friend's story, the second loops are the wise person's story and at the centre is the important lesson.

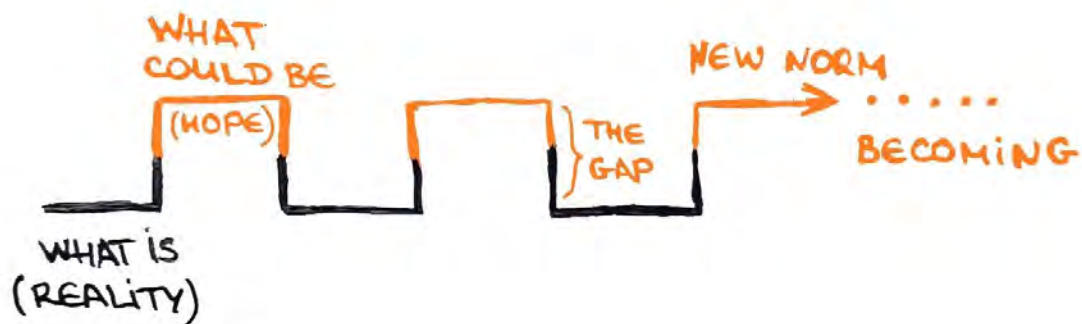
Applying the nested loops technique to your story will maintain your audience's attention so that they remain open to new things until they think they have the final piece. It gives them the sense that they do not have it all yet and they should stay concentrated and curious to follow how these will all end.

## Benefits:

- Shows how you obtained your wisdom/knowledge through various interactions.
- Explains how you arrived at a conclusion or inspired to achieve something.

## STORYTELLING TECHNIQUE 4: SPARKLINES

Sparkline storytelling was created by Nancy Duarte, who is a graphic designer that uses sparklines to analyse famous speeches graphically. She presents the speeches in “*what is*” and “*what could be*” manner, contrasting our ordinary world with an ideal, improved world. You start your story with what currently is (facts, historical events, etc.) and then shock the audience with your perspective of what could be, alternating between challenge and solution, pain, and pleasure, until reaching the “new bliss/norm” at the end.



For example, if you have decided to organise a campaign about climate change by applying the sparklines technique to your story, it could have the following key points:

- You present facts about the warming of Earth's atmosphere lately, emphasising that climate and natural life are changing at a fast pace. You can show pictures of drought, forest fires, floods, etc. to catch your audience's attention. (“*what is*”, the reality)

- *Then you present the solution – tackling climate change by eating less meat, stopping deforestation, transitioning to renewable energy, etc. (“what could be”)*
- *After that, you again go back to reality by presenting relevant facts - global temperatures have been rising for over a century, the last few years are with the highest temperatures recorded in history. The result is heatwaves, rising sea levels. (“what is”, the reality)*
- *And you end the story with a positive tone, presenting the “new bliss/norm” – You say that the good news is that society is becoming more and more conscious about the impact they are making. Many governments are taking a stand regarding climate change and it is becoming a top agenda item in political discourse around the world. You encourage your audience to protect our planet for our future and future generations. (“what could be”)*

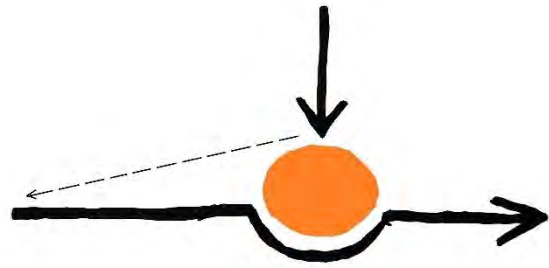
Sparklines is a pretty emotional technique that is sure to motivate your audience to support your campaign or cause. By applying it to your story, you draw attention to the problems in society, in personal lives, businesses. You show what is present and create and fuel a desire for change. It is a relevant technique in case you want to inspire your audience to action or create hope and excitement among them.

#### **Benefits:**

- *Emotional appeal is a secret weapon to getting into the hearts and minds of your audience and it works the best.*
- *Evokes a sense of hope for a better tomorrow.*
- *Often leads to action.*

## STORYTELLING TECHNIQUE 5: IN MEDIAS RES

"In medias res" is a Latin term that literally means "into the middle of things". With this storytelling technique, you skip the exposition, start in the heat of the action (with the main character already in the middle of things), and then go back to the beginning to explain how you (or the character) got there. Dropping your audience right into the most exciting part of your story would ensure that they got gripped from the beginning and would stay engaged to find out what happens.



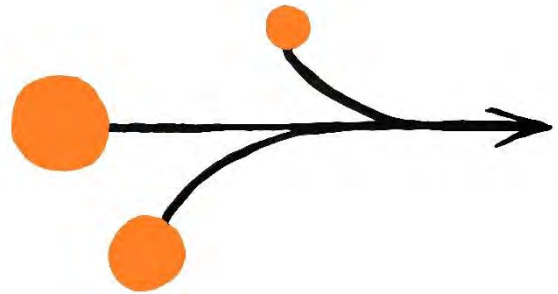
However, if you decide to use this technique for your story, try not to show too much of the story straight away. Start with hinting at something bizarre or unexpected that needs to be further explained. Attract the attention of the audience, but leave it on the level that they will wonder to get more. Also note that this technique works more for shorter stories, otherwise you risk your audience to get frustrated and lose interest.

### Benefits:

- *It is attention-grabbing because you start your story with the most fundamental part.*
- *Creates suspense which adds to keeping the audience hooked.*

## STORYTELLING TECHNIQUE 6: CONVERGING IDEAS

The converging ideas technique is ideal when you want to tell your audience a story of how different branches of thought came together to form a single product or idea. It illustrates how your idea builds on the work of several people or originated at multiple issues. It is a useful way to show your audience how an idea developed from scratch over time as well as how the relationships have formed.



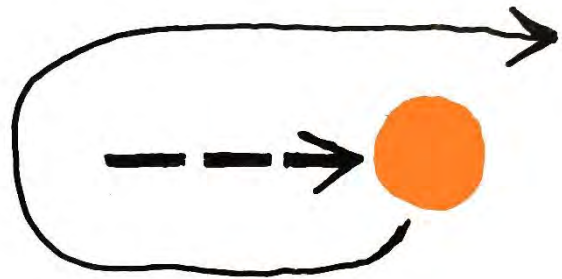
Converging ideas storytelling is used a lot in partnerships, showing how great minds come together and solve a problem. It is also suitable for showing the birth of a movement, explaining how a single idea was the culmination of several great minds working towards one goal.

### Benefits:

- *Demonstrates how development occurred.*
- *Demonstrates collaborations between people.*
- *Presenting how symbiotic relationships have formed.*
- *Shows how to deal with problems.*

## STORYTELLING TECHNIQUE 7: FALSE START

With the false start technique, you start telling a seemingly predictable story but then disrupt it suddenly and begin over again. It is a shock tactic used to give your audience false expectations and capture it into paying closer attention to your message.



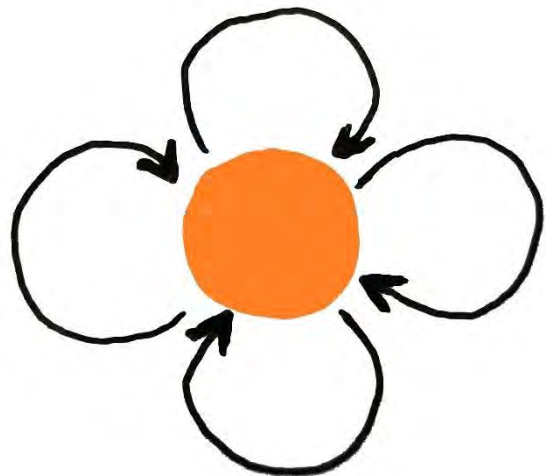
It is a useful technique when talking about times where you experienced a failure and then you had to go back and start again. It is also an opportunity to share what you have learned from your experience.

### Benefits:

- *It relates to the audience when you talk about failure.*
- *Displays problem-solving.*

## STORYTELLING TECHNIQUE 8: THE PETAL

Imagine a chamomile flower with many petals around the stem. The petal structure is something similar and finds expression in telling multiple stories from one or multiple speakers that relate to one main message/concept. It works best if you have several unconnected stories you want to tell or things you want to reveal that all relate to a single message.



This structure is great for allowing multiple speakers to work on the same theme. Stories are told one by one before returning to the main concept. The petals can overlap as one story introduces the next but each should be a complete narrative in itself.

**Benefits:**

- · *Provides a lot of narratives and emotional appeal around the same message.*
- · *Provides the voice of multiple speakers.*
- · *The audience comprehends the importance of your message via a series of stories.*

\*\*\*

These were eight of the most popular techniques to use for your story. It is up to you to decide which one would work best for the goal of your campaign or civic activity.

We highly recommend using your own stories. Choosing something that personally happened in your life will help your audience connect with you and your message. You could of course choose to tell a story about someone else or make up one, but when it is possible try to pull from your own past.

Remember that whatever storytelling technique you choose, it works when used wisely. The core of every story is its subject matter and benefit. Look for the drama, reach out to emotions, engage your audience, and you will move closer to achieving your campaign goals. Good luck!

# Increase your storytelling techniques power!

## Delivering a story by using different storytelling techniques

### The powers gained at the end of this mission:

- *Knowledge about the different storytelling techniques*
- *Ability to identify storytelling techniques used in different stories*
- *Applying specific storytelling techniques to your own story*

### The magic of the storytelling techniques for your campaigns:

- *Choosing the right storytelling technique for your campaign could ensure that it stays in your audience's mind for a long time*

### Start your mission here:

1. Have a group with two-three of your friends and start the mission with a quick “warm-up” activity. Each of you thinks of a favourite story – from your childhood, from a favourite book/movie, etc. – and tells it in a few sentences.

#### *The Storytelling Wizard says:*

*Remember that this is a “warm-up” activity and you do not need to spend too much time on thinking about and presenting your story. It could be the first story that comes to your mind, not necessarily*

*your favourite one. Also, do not tell the story in too many details. Try to be as short as possible, but still present the main plot and message in a clear way.*

2. Each of you looks at the pictures above that illustrate the storytelling techniques and try to guess which picture resembles your story the most. If necessary, check the explanation text for the techniques for reference.

***Mission hints:***

*After someone guesses the storytelling technique for his/her story, there can be a short discussion with providing feedback so that all of you agree on one technique for each story.*

- 3 Take 5 mins for each of you to write down on a sheet of paper top 5 important topics you would like to make a campaign about. Each of you present their topics and the one that has been mentioned the most is going to be the topic for your campaign.

***Mission hints:***

*It could be a topic relevant either to your community, or to your friends, school, dormitory, neighbourhood. It could be about recycling, cleaning, saving energy, growing trees for fresh air, online risks, etc. Any topic you consider important to your audience.*

- 4 Think of keywords/phrases that match the chosen topic and write them down on sheets of paper.

***The Storytelling Wizard says:***

*For example, if your topic is green living, you can put "global warming", "recycle", "care about environment", "trash", "save", "reduce", etc. Think of a few characters to be included in the story as well. Also, consider a few random words that do not that much relate to your topic but would create some "spice" to the story. Put the sheets of paper in a bowl, jar, or bag so that everyone can have easy access to them.*

- 5 Make two groups and let each group pick sheets of paper one by one until they are over. The two groups are supposed to end up with equal number of sheets of paper. Every picked word/phrase should make at least one sentence.
- 6 Make the same lottery with storytelling techniques written down on sheets of paper. Each group picks one technique and builds a story using the withdrawn words/phrases and applying the chosen technique.

***Mission hints:***

*To better structure your story you should first make a working plan. Consider applying any of the planning tools (Story Map, Story Canva or Story Board, presented in Chapter 5 and Chapter 6) to visualise the steps/scenes of your campaign.*

- 7 In the end, each group presents its story and the other group has to guess which storytelling technique has been applied.

# Become The Storyteller of Your Hero's Journey

## The powers gained at the end of this mission:

- *A Spell Book for effectively applying the Monomyth in a campaign.*
- *An Incantation for using powerful imagery in order to make a point and convince people to take action.*
- *An Enchanted Key that unlocks one's own potential for creative storytelling.*

## The magic of the Monomyth for your campaigns:

- *Did something immediately "click" as you started reading about the Monomyth in this chapter? Did the twelve stages suddenly make perfect sense to you without much effort, or any effort at all? Did numerous story examples based on this technique flood your mind, as if on their own volition? This is the magic of the Monomyth. It is a universal storytelling technique that has shaped people's understanding of the world across cultures and continents since the dawn of civilization. Your audience will have an intuitive understanding of its structure, which will help you engage them into your campaign almost immediately.*
- *The Monomyth uses powerful archetypal imagery that stimulates the human psyche. "The Call to Adventure", "The Hero", "The Wise Man", "The Magical Helper", "The Dark Lord", "The Journey to the Unknown", etc. are all easily relatable ideas, as they describe a universal struggle that human beings have experienced time and time again not only in the world, but also within their minds.*
- *The Monomyth is already a powerful storytelling technique, but what if you take it one step further and make it so that the audience takes the hero's mantle in your campaign's journey? For this mission, you will design a campaign, in which the audience not just empathizes with, but in fact becomes your story's Alice in Wonderland, Luke Skywalker, or Frodo Baggins.*

## Start your mission here:

1. Either alone or in a team, choose an issue you want to base your campaign on. It is important that you feel strongly about it, so that you can imbue that emotion into your Monomyth.
2. Choose your campaign's target audience, who will undertake the "Hero's Journey". Depending on the issue you want to tackle, it could be anyone: young people your age, parents of young people, teachers, or even legislators, if you want your campaign to affect policy. Yes, even politicians can be heroes, if motivated correctly!
3. Draw the Monomyth illustration from this chapter on a flipchart and map ideas for each of the stages, as you complete the next steps of the mission.
4. Design "The Call to Adventure", tailored to your audience. This is the White Rabbit, who rushes Alice to follow him, as there is no time to waste, the riveting, but incomplete hologram of Princess Leia on Luke's newly acquired R2D2 droid, the moment Gandalf entrusts Frodo with the One Ring, without telling him anything about it. Note that the adventure itself still remains a mystery for all of these characters, so this stage is NOT about bombarding your target audience with shocking, detailed statistics on the issue of your campaign. Rather, it is about spicing up their "Ordinary World" with the opportunity to take a single step into "The Unknown".

### ***The Storytelling Wizard says:***

*"The Call to Adventure" is the most important stage of the Hero's Journey. It is a very short moment, during which you have to both gain your target audience's attention AND convince them to take*

*the hero's mantle. Thus, your message should be short, captivating, and most importantly – relevant to them.*

*In order to make it so, figure out what your audience's "Ordinary World" is and why they might want to take a break from it. Are they bored, or in search of meaningful activities to take part in? Are they tired from work or study, and are simply looking for ways to take their minds away? Are they motivated to make change in the world, but don't know where to start? Different people have different motivations, which might also vary based on the timing of your "Call to Adventure" (e.g. late in the afternoon, during summer break, etc.). Chapter 5 describes various methods and tools for better understanding your target audience and for tailoring your message accordingly.*

*Next, chose the format of your "Call to Adventure" based on your target audience. If your "Hero" is a teenager, surfing online, the format might be an Instagram post, or a short video. If you are targeting adults, you might be better off posting in specific online forums / Facebook groups, or handing away pamphlets in shopping malls or subway stations.*

*Finally, specify what action the "Hero" has to take, in order to begin their journey (this will lead them to their "Mentor" – see Step 5 of the mission). It should be short and simple, such as visiting a website, watching a video, or attending a short presentation.*

*Remember, even the greatest heroes are reluctant at first. Luke wasn't called to save Galaxy at the very beginning – he simply had to bring a broken druid to old Ben, who lived relatively close by.*

5. Introduce the “Hero” to their “Mentor”. Now that your target audience has taken the first step into the “Unknown”, it is time they understand what is truly at stake and why they are the ones that must take action. This is the stage, during which you will offer the relevant stats (though still in a clear and concise manner) that will shock your audience and prove how imminent the threat is. You want your Hero to recycle? Show them how much of the Ocean is covered in plastic. Also show them pictures of suffering animals due to pollution, in order to engage their emotions. They are still not convinced? Maybe they think their contribution is too small to make a change? After all, what can a single person do on the matter, if entire governments and corporations are failing? This is where you come in, dear Mentor. Remember what Lady Galadriel, the powerful elven sorceress, told Frodo, when he offered her the ring? Here’s a reminder: *“You are a ring-bearer, Frodo. To bear a ring of power is to be alone. This task was appointed to you. And if you do not find a way, no one will.”* In other words, you must convince your audience that they are the Hero and that this is their journey. After all, they reside on this planet. If they don’t take action, who will?
6. Show the “Hero” how to cross the “Threshold”. This is the point of no return: the moment your Hero, who now knows what the stakes are, must decide whether to undertake the great “Journey into the Unknown”, or keep their old habits and leave the world to ruin. Will they face the Queen of Hearts, fly away on the Millennium Falcon, or venture forth to the deadly Mordor? Will they start recycling, donating, or volunteering? Will they suggest changing an unfair law in parliament? You, the story-teller, the mentor, have played your part. You have conveyed the message. Now it is up to the Hero to decide.
7. Optional Step: Map out “The Journey to the Unknown”. Crossing the threshold already requires the Hero to take specific action, but if you feel inspired, you

might further immerse them by offering a specific “Journey to the Unknown” with various adventures along the way. It could be as simple as a Facebook group, where you post monthly challenges they might take on (maybe even together with other “Allies” from the group), or as complex as an interactive web platform, designed by you. Let your creativity and inspiration guide you. After all, only Lewis Carroll could have imagined the mad, but genius world of Wonderland, and only you can be the storyteller of your campaign. ☺

### **Mission hints:**

*Don't be afraid to use magical language and imagery in your messaging. The Monomyth is effective because it directly refers to age-old human struggles, using very specific words and images. So explicitly calling your target audience “The Hero”, their task “The Journey to the Unknown”, etc., while seemingly awkward, would in fact greatly enhance the effectiveness of your campaign, if done sparingly enough and only at key moments, such as the first sentence of “The Call to Adventure”, the final slide of your “Mentor” presentation, just when the Hero is offered to “Cross the Threshold”, etc. There are no rigid rules for this – be brave and trust your imagination!*

*Call for specific action at every stage. This is valid for all campaigns, but it is especially true for Monomyth stories. The Hero should know exactly what must be done in order for to reach their next quest. Particularly when they are about to “Cross the Threshold”, they should have clear and detailed instructions in front of them, as they might never see you again (e.g. go to such-and-such website, navigate such-and-such menu, choose the sum that feels right to you, and click “Donate”).*

*Start small, finish big. "The Call to Adventure" should suggest the simplest and smallest of actions, but each consecutive stage must be a tad more challenging than the previous one, until the Hero has full understanding of the stakes and their responsibility, and thus can commit to your cause with a final big action.*

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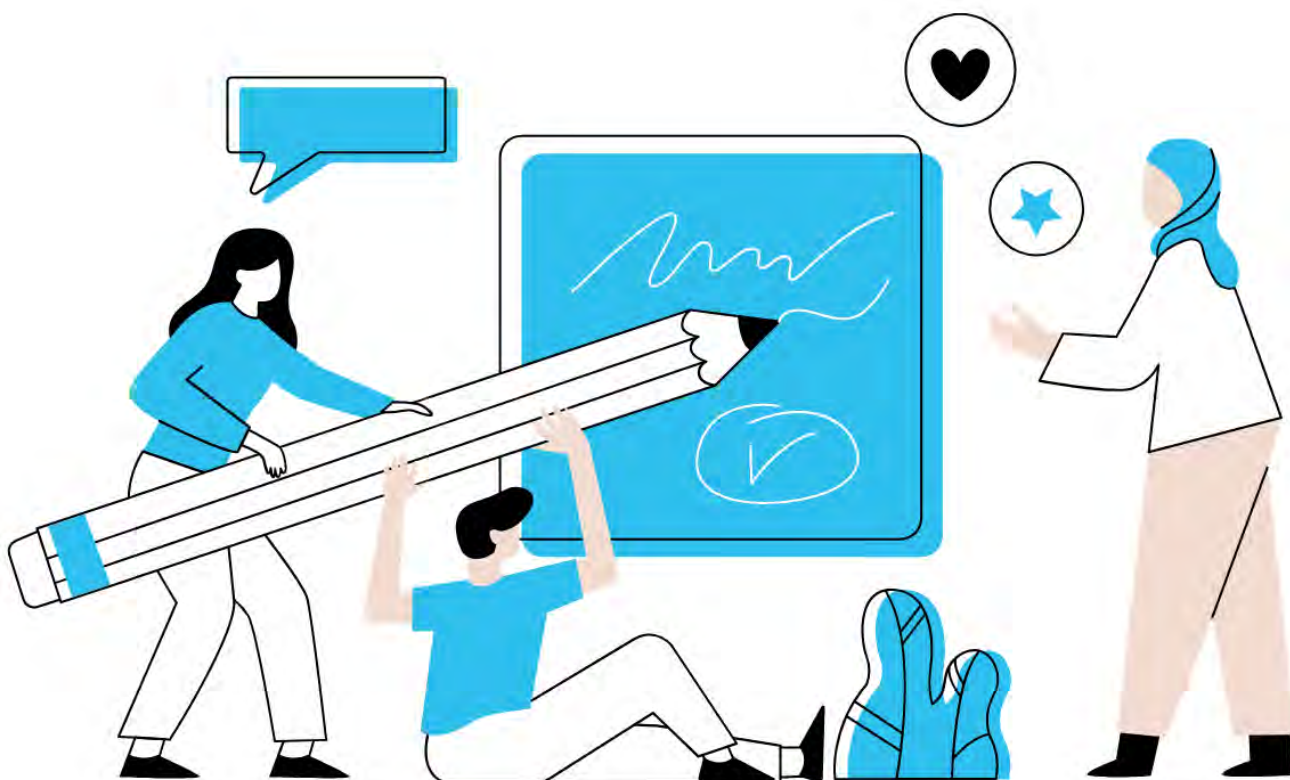
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# Storytelling planning methods and tools

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**FUNDAȚIA DANIS**  
pentru Dezvoltare Managerială

## What can you find in this chapter?

Discover how you can use appropriate planning methods and tools to boost your storytelling, communication, and advocacy campaigns. Learn how to express your ideas and opinions, influence friends, family, peers, decision-makers, NGOs, public authorities, other stakeholders from your community by employing powerful tools for:

- *Understanding your audience's attitudes, behaviors, assumptions before developing your campaign's message;*
- *Designing meaningful campaigns and relevant stories for your audience and for the cause you want to promote or problem - to solve;*
- *Structuring stories that can efficiently deliver your message, make sense for your audience, and help you reach the campaign's goals.*

Start with acquiring essential knowledge of some crucial storytelling planning methods and tools. Then, challenge yourself and your friends with the missions we prepared for you to practice the new information. Finally, go and read more about those things you consider the most relevant for your campaigns and goals.

## Essential methods and tools for planning your storytelling campaigns

You have a precise aim in mind: you want to tell your friends, your peers, public authorities, decision-makers, or your community, in general, something you consider

relevant for them to learn about, or you want to motivate them to care about a specific issue or to move them into action and bring change in the community.

Smaller or bigger, what you have here is the need for developing a communication, storytelling, or advocacy campaign. How do you plan your campaign? How can you make sure that you will tell the right story to the targeted audience? How can you make sure your campaign has the impact you want? And how can you validate your story that is powerful and has everything it needs?

From all the storytelling planning methods and tools, we selected some that we consider essential for a young activist storyteller to learn about:

- *Design thinking, for understanding your audience and tailor your message and campaign based on needs and insights you gathered about them;*
- *The Story Canvas developed by Digital Storytellers, for impactful and meaningful digital storytelling campaigns;*
- *The Story Map, for creating powerful linear stories to accompany your campaigns.*

## **Design thinking for planning your storytelling campaigns**

Design thinking is a problem-solving process used mainly to generate innovative services and products and meaningful communication and storytelling campaigns.

It is an extremely human-oriented method that helps us unblock ourselves from the self-imposed constraints we work within, challenge our assumptions, redefine problems, and identify alternative strategies that might not be instantly obvious. It focuses on solving problems, but what makes this process more remarkable is the

focus on the “users”, on those for whom you want to re-design experiences as users, audiences, customers, clients, beneficiaries, etc.

The process includes five steps: empathize, define, ideate, prototype, test. Let’s see them one by one and understand how you may use them:

In planning a storytelling campaign, the empathize step’s main objective is to discover the needs of the users/your target audience. To really empathize, it is not enough only to ask people: *What is your need? What do you want to hear? What will make you act or care?* Sometimes they do not know, or they cannot express it in the best way.

There is no more efficient way for you to learn about the importance of listening to others, collect information, and decipher the meaning behind what people are saying, doing, thinking, or feeling. There are specific methods used for empathy:

- *Search for insights into the people’s stories about their experience that you want to understand better;*
- *Observe people, go where they live, work or play; observe what they do or do not do, what they say or do not say;*
- *Finally, understand people at the following three levels: functional (try out what the people regularly experience), cognitive (understand what makes sense to the people), and emotional (understand what people feel).*

For “listening” to your audience, you may use observation, video ethnography, interviews, group discussions, visual thinking (example: asking people to draw what the experience means to them), role-playing (ask people to perform a short play on what the experience means to them), storytelling (ask people to tell stories about their experience - the most successful stories, the worst stories), etc.

Once all the data is collected, and the audience is really understood, you must *define* its needs. This means to unpack and synthesize the empathy findings into compelling needs and insights and scope a specific and meaningful challenge for your campaign. Why do you have to do that? Your goal is to come up with an actionable problem statement, a challenge that will bring specific focus to the idea generation process. In other words, you need to select the direction from which you will address a particular problem you identified while adding to this perspective any valuable insight you acquired through the empathize step and which will help you ideate for your campaign.

In the *ideate* step, you aim to generate radical design alternatives to the users' experience. You will need to generate many ideas for your campaign message, channels, tools, etc., and these should be as diverse as possible. Following the same principles, it is imperative that you keep the task of generating ideas separated from the task of evaluating ideas in this step. The ideation process happens through complex or simple brainstorming or visual thinking techniques.

To *prototype* means to "think with your hands," and any prototype should be cheap, fast, and rough. A prototype can be anything that takes a physical form. It might be a wall of post-it notes with ideas about your campaign, a role-playing activity, a place, an object, an interface, an acting out, an audience journey, or even a storyboard of your video story for the campaign. When you prototype, you need to go back to your audience to get their feedback, observe and understand how they use the prototype, and explore, test, and get inspiration.

In the final step - test, it is your chance to get feedback on the best solutions, ideas you found to the users' needs related to your campaign. And you will use this feedback to refine the solution and continue learning about your users. The testing

should be done with a “low-resolution” campaign component that your audience can pilot/try out. Then, you will go back to the process and create the final campaign you want to deliver.

Here are the final aspects you need to learn about design thinking before planning your campaign:

- *Keep in mind that this is and should be an iterative process;*
- *When you empathize, you need to adopt the beginner mindset - you do not know anything about your audience, you need to leave behind any assumptions you might have about them and their understandings, needs, knowledge, behaviors, etc.;*
- *You need to involve the users in the creation process; they will co-design the experience with you, being involved in most of the steps;*
- *This process very much builds on the power of visual thinking and storytelling techniques that activate different parts of the brain and move you or your users into action.*

Take the mission we prepared for you and your friends at the end of this chapter; learn more about the process and try out its power for your future advocacy or storytelling campaigns.

## **The Story Canvas for digital campaigns**

Another tool you may use in planning your campaigns is The Story Canvas, developed by Digital Storytellers, available at the following link:

<https://www.digitalstorytellers.com.au/the-story-canvas/>.

As you probably know already, advocacy campaigns raise public awareness, motivate people to care or act on relevant public, social, civic, political, economic issues. So, any social marketing or advocacy campaign you want to plan will serve at least one of the following goals:

- *To educate a specific audience about the issue;*
- *To motivate a specific audience to care about the issue;*
- *To mobilize a specific audience to act upon the issue in a particular direction.*

Read more about the canvas at the link we provided. However, here, we summarized for you the main steps (and the order of the steps) and questions you need to use to fill out the canvas for your communication, storytelling, or advocacy campaign, based on the communication goal you have - to educate, motivate, mobilize or move people into action.

<b>PURPOSE:</b> Why does this story need to be told? Why should people care about your campaign?				
<b>3. Audience</b>  <i>Primary</i> – takes action  <i>Secondary</i> – hears your story  • Profile  • React (emotions)	<b>5. Key messages</b>  Three things you want your audience to remember about the problem & solution, and why now?	<b>9. Story</b>  Concept  Structure  Type of story (explainer, vision, personal story, etc.)	<b>4. People &amp; Places</b>  Who & Where  <i>People</i> – relevant for you and the audience; how you reach them  <i>Places</i> – relevant for people, for the story, for the	<b>8. Campaign</b>  How will you get your story out there? Develop it <i>before</i> the story.  • Delivery channels

• Impact			"challenge" people had to take	(online/offline )
	<p><b>6. Call to action</b></p> <p>What do you want your audience to do?</p> <p>Ex.: share the message to others, challenge themselves, sign a petition, protest, etc.</p>		<p><b>7. Style &amp; Tone</b></p> <p>Look &amp; Feel</p> <p>Connected to the emotions/reaction you want to get</p> <p>Colors, music, language, time of day, font, the story's pace, etc.</p>	<p>• Promotion channels</p> <p>• Supporters</p> <p>• Partners/ partnerships</p> <p>• Most important moments of the campaign</p>
<p><b>1. Outcomes</b> raising awareness, shifts in perceptions, policy change, etc.</p>		<p><b>2. Indicators</b> (SMART)</p>		

Practice the canvas through the mission we propose for you, and learn how to plan out your next advocacy, communication, or storytelling campaign!

## The Story Map

The Story Map is a straightforward tool to develop and structure your story or multiple stories you might want to use in your campaigns. You can use the map at the beginning of your story's ideation process, helping you cover all the parts and aspects needed by a good story. Also, you may use it after you have already

brainstormed for story ideas. Still, you want to make sure you have everything you need for your story and for the plot you have in mind - basically, a good challenge, a tense moment, and a resolution for the challenge you propose to your characters.

To fill out the Story Map means to think and plan out at least the following aspects:

- *The main character or characters of your story (keep in mind that in some advocacy campaigns, especially when you want to move people into action, your audience might be your main heroes);*
- *The context, the settings, the tone of your story, and other characters relevant for your story and your plot;*
- *The challenge your heroes will take (this challenge always includes a moral aspect, a value you want to share with your story);*
- *The story's resolution - how the challenge, the problem, or the conflict can be solved. What is the solution you show or propose to your audience of the campaign?*

In the second section of the map, you will outline the details of your story, making sure you build the plot for the three acts of the story: the beginning (introduce the hero and the challenge), the middle (build the tension), the end (solve the conflict, provide the solution).

The Story Map is used for linear, hero's journey stories. If you want to try new storytelling techniques or non-linear and interactive stories, go to the chapters we prepared for these new methods and get the inspiration you need for your campaigns!

## The Story Map

<b>The main character / the hero</b>	<b>Setting / places / tone &amp; other characters</b>
<b>Problem / challenge</b>	<b>Solution / resolution</b>

<b>The Beginning</b> setting, characters, introduce the central conflict/problem (explain the problem you want to solve)	<b>The Middle</b> tension increases, it ends with the tensest moment of the story, the biggest challenge of the hero (the major crisis)	<b>The End</b> the main conflict is solved, and success is celebrated

*Go to the last mission of this chapter and practice building your stories by using The Story Map!*

# Increase your storytelling planning powers!

## Prototype your campaign story

### The powers gained at the end of this mission:

- *Knowledge about how the design thinking process can serve in developing the campaign's messages/stories.*
- *The beginner mindset, needed to empathize with users and tailored the campaign's stories based on their needs and insights.*

### The magic of design thinking for your campaigns:

- *The design thinking process "forces" you to interact with the target audience, give up your assumptions and prejudices you might have about your target audience, and really listen to their needs, problems, challenges, obstacles.*
- *Being able to empathize with your target audience, understand your audience's needs and insights helps you develop meaningful and powerful campaigns that can enhance the way you would like people to react to your stories and messages.*
- *Before investing too much time and other resources in your campaigns, you get to prototype and then test your ideas and fine-tune them before launching them out in public with an increased chance of success.*

## Start your mission here:

1. Take the mission alone or invite a couple of friends or more to join you. You should select one cause you would like to develop a campaign for and establish your communication objective: inform, educate, or motivate people to act.

### ***The Storytelling Wizard says:***

*Do not spend too much time choosing the topic. This is only an exercise to understand how you may use the design thinking process for developing your story campaign.*

### ***Mission hints:***

*You may plan to discover and prototype a message that would educate young people about Sustainable Development Goals, or that would aim to convince young people to recycle plastic or to go voting. Choose something relevant for you and your group of friends and come first in your mind.*

2. Choose your campaign's target audience, be as specific as possible - such as high school students, university students, parents, professors/teachers, etc. Identify 5-7 people (users) from the target audience that you might know or quickly approach to learning more about their needs and insights (empathize).
3. Approach the users, face-to-face or online, for collecting information about what they say, what they do, what they think, or what they feel about the issues you want to advocate about in your campaign.

***Mission hints:***

- *Prepare 3-5 questions to interview some of the users to find what they say, think, or feel about the cause.*
- *Collect stories about the users' experience related to your cause to learn what users do or do not do or how they feel while interacting with the issues related to the campaign's cause.*
- *Ask the users to draw how they feel, think, or explain how they understand the cause for which you want to advocate.*
- *You would need to "dig" in each of the stories, information they give by asking many times "why?". Keep in mind that your goal is to discover needs the users might have regarding the cause you want to advocate for and collect relevant insights that will help you take the right approach in developing the message of your campaign that would target the users/the target audience you selected.*

4. Cluster and analyze the information you collected and summarize your challenge using this structure: USERS + NEED TO (user's need).... BECAUSE.... (surprising insight about the users). Then, considering this challenge, start ideating for your campaign message by answering first the following questions:

- *What should the message definitely NOT be about?*
- *What the message should be about*
- *Who should deliver the message?*
- *How should we deliver the message?*

5. Develop 3-5 messages/story-lines you would like to use in your campaign and go back to your users and present them. These are your prototypes, and you aim to collect feedback and improve your message.

**Mission hints:**

*Depending on what you have in mind as a campaign, your prototype can take the form of a slogan, a poster, a collage, a storyboard of a video, etc. However, this prototype should not take you a lot of time and resources.*

*Save time and resources for what you would select as your final message for piloting or testing with a bigger group of your target audience before starting the whole campaign you have in mind.*

## **Use The Story Canvas for your digital storytelling campaigns**

### **The powers gained at the end of this mission:**

- *Knowledge of how to use The Story Canvas for planning a digital storytelling campaign.*
- *Planning skills for developing storytelling campaigns for advocacy.*

### **The magic of The Story Canvas for your campaigns:**

- *The Story Canvas helps you gain a clear image of how you should start thinking and planning your storytelling campaigns to advocate for the causes you believe in.*

- *The canvas does not allow you to skip any of the critical steps in planning your storytelling campaign or move into the story topic before knowing its purpose, the aim of your campaign, the audience, the key messages, etc.*

## Start your mission here:

1. Study the SAIH advocacy videos from the following Youtube channel:  
<https://www.youtube.com/user/saihnett/videos>, and choose one to analyze for this mission. For instance, you could use:

Who wants to be a volunteer?

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ymcflrj\\_rRc&t=1s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ymcflrj_rRc&t=1s)

Let's save Africa, gone wrong

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xbqA6o8\\_WC0&t=7s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xbqA6o8_WC0&t=7s)

2. Use The Story Canvas developed by The Digital Storytellers to analyze the advocacy video you chose. Imagine the process that SAIH went through to produce this video if they were to use The Story Canvas.

### ***The Storytelling Wizard says:***

*You might not have all the answers for the canvas' blocks, but the process will help you to learn very quickly how to use the canvas. To better understand how you can employ the canvas, you may also go back to the first part of this chapter and read the summary we made for you.*

3. Now let's try out The Story Canvas for the following media project: create a video story project for promoting the dialogue between young native people and young migrants/ refugees from one community; the purpose of the video will be to make young people from the community to care about this topic. Do you not like this topic? Then, you may use a challenge of your choice for developing a digital storytelling project.

***The Storytelling Wizard says:***

*It's better to use a big sheet of paper, draw your canvas, and use colorful sticky notes to answer each block's relevant questions.*

*Or, you may generate your digital canvas at this link*

<https://www.digitalstorytellers.com.au/the-story-canvas/>

Also, at this moment, do not really worry about the technical parts of your media project, like filming, production, etc. Now, it's the moment of getting all your ideas out and plan the campaign - identify what you would like to have, and you will find the technical solutions later for your campaign.

## **Plan in detail your story by using the Story Map**

### **The powers gained at the end of this mission:**

- *Knowledge of how to use The Story Map for planning a digital storytelling campaign.*
- *Planning skills for developing storytelling campaigns for advocacy.*

## The magic of The Story Map for your campaigns:

- *The Story Map helps you gain a clear image of how you should start thinking and planning the storytelling campaigns to advocate for the causes in which you believe.*
- *The canvas does not allow you to skip any of the essential steps in planning your storytelling campaign or move into the story topic before knowing the purpose of the story, the aim of your campaign, the audience, the key messages, etc. are.*

## Start your mission here:

1. Choose the results of one of the previous missions (*Prototype your campaign story* or *Use The Story Canvas for your digital storytelling campaigns*), and let's develop your story in detail!
2. Print out or draw the Story Map presented at the beginning of this chapter on a paper sheet. Using the information you already collected in the previous mission you completed, start ideating and maybe brainstorming with your friends about the following aspects:
  - *The main characters of your story;*
  - *The settings & tone;*
  - *The challenge the main character/characters will take;*
  - *The resolution of the story will send out the message that you want with your campaign.*

### 3. Build the story up, designing:

- *The beginning - this will give the context of the story and show the problem you want to advocate about;*
- *The middle - create the challenge, the major crisis that your main characters should take to solve the problem;*
- *The end - present the solution that your characters found to solve the problem.*

#### ***Mission hints:***

*In the case of an advocacy campaign, you can transfer the "responsibility"/the challenge of the story hero to your audience.*

*You may challenge the audience to find a solution and a resolution to the story, or you may show them the path they could take as the heroes of the campaign.*

#### ***The Storytelling Wizard says:***

*Don't forget what you learned during the first mission. Once your Story Map is ready, present it as a prototype to potential "users"/members of your targeted audience. Get their feedback, listen to what they understand from your story and how they would react, and then go back to the Story Map and further develop or improve your story.*

## Learn more!

In summarizing the design thinking process, we used the free resources developed by the Institute of Design at Stanford, which we also recommend to you for learning more about the process:

Institute of Design at Stanford, An Introduction to Design Thinking - Process Guide:

<https://dschool-old.stanford.edu/sandbox/groups/designresources/wiki/36873/attachments/74b3d/ModeGuideBOOTCAMP2010L.pdf>;

Institute of Design at Stanford, Design Thinking Bootleg,

[https://static1.squarespace.com/static/57c6b79629687fde090a0fdd/t/5b19b2f2aa4a99e99b26b6bb/1528410876119/dschool\\_bootleg\\_deck\\_2018\\_final\\_sm+%282%29.pdf](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/57c6b79629687fde090a0fdd/t/5b19b2f2aa4a99e99b26b6bb/1528410876119/dschool_bootleg_deck_2018_final_sm+%282%29.pdf).

Also, for more in-depth knowledge of design thinking, we recommend you to consult these two books:

Tim Brown, Change by Design: How Design Thinking Transforms Organizations and Inspires Innovation, 2009, available at <https://www.amazon.com/Change-Design-Transforms-Organizations-Innovation/dp/0061766089>;

IDEO.org, The Field Guide to Human-Centered Design, 2015, available at

<https://www.designkit.org/>.

Check the Mobilisation Lab's resources to understand how to use the design thinking process for developing advocacy campaigns <https://mobilisationlab.org/training-coaching/campaign-accelerator-training/resources/>. MobLab was developed inside Greenpeace based on their long and sound experience in advocating and mobilizing people.

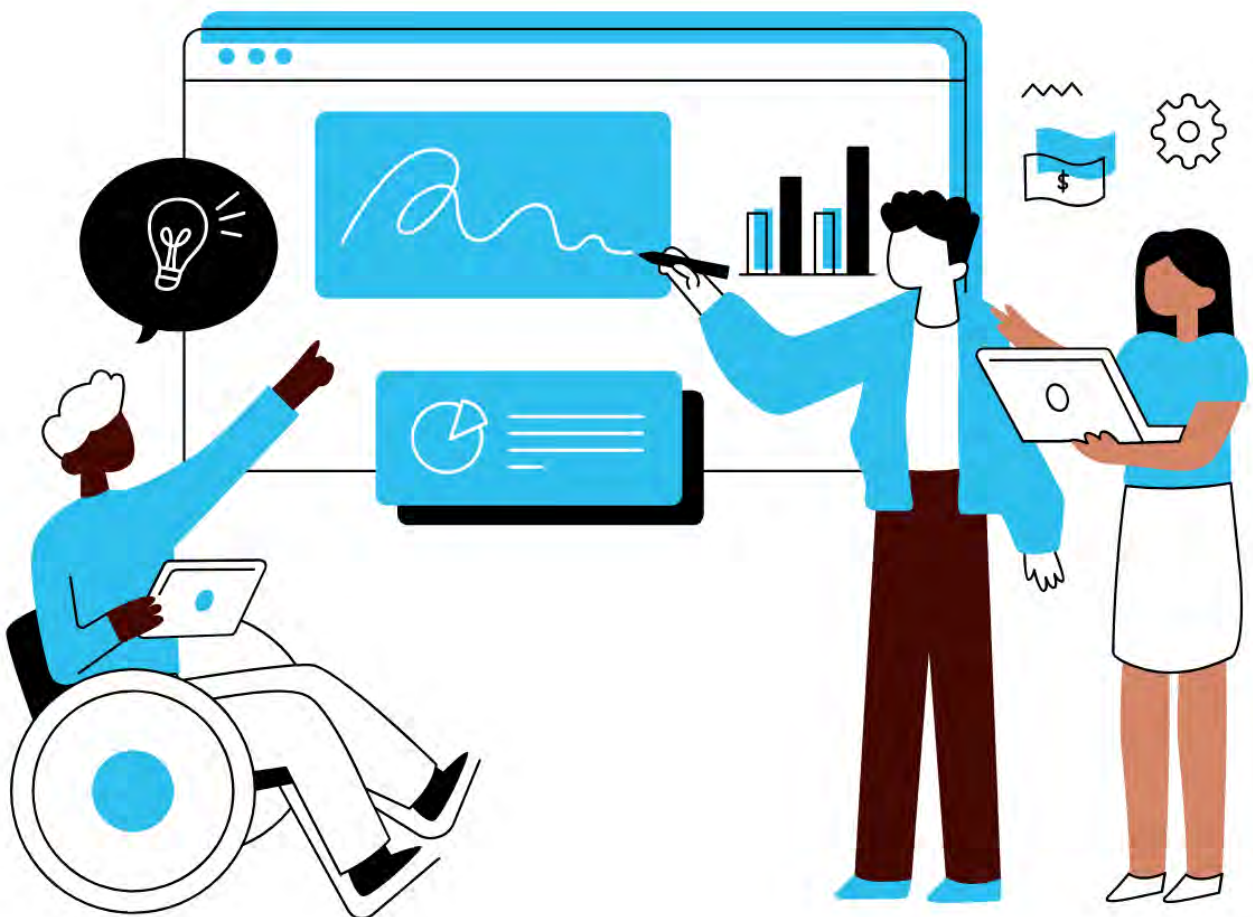
Use the Digital Storytellers' website to learn more about The Story Canvas and find examples of digital campaigns they developed using this tool:

<https://www.digitalstorytellers.com.au/the-story-canvas/>.

Fredrik Carl Wouda Wouda - Karin Wouda

AWESOME PEOPLE

# Visual storytelling methods and tools



## What you can find in this chapter

You have a story you want to include in your campaign, it can be the story of why the campaign is important and/or the story of a person who is affected by the cause you want to lift in your campaign. You want to engage your audience with this story, so how do you do it? One of the most effective ways is to use visual storytelling or a visual narrative as it is also called. By using powerful visuals you can engage your audience on an emotional level and it will help raise awareness for your cause, it can build trust with your audience and also inspire donors to help achieve your goals. Did you know that 57% of people who watch a nonprofit video go on to donate? How awesome is not that? Visual storytelling is a powerful way to create change and in this chapter, you will discover how to use it for your campaigns to influence friends, family, peers, decision-makers, NGOs, public authorities, other stakeholders from your community by employing powerful tools for:

- *Understanding the importance of using pictures*
- *Using infographics to better explain the cause you want to promote or problem – to solve.*
- *Using storyboard to create engaging videos in your campaign*

Start with acquiring essential knowledge on visual storytelling and how to use different tools such as photos, infographics, and videos, then challenge yourself and your friends with the missions we prepared for you to practice the new information, and finally go and read more and try out things you consider the most relevant for your campaigns and your goals.

# Visual storytelling

So, using powerful pictures, videos, and other visual elements will bring your content to life. Visual storytelling can supercharge your story since it will be more memorable, humans are visual creatures and our brain can more easily store images which also means that visual storytelling helps us learn better and it boosts engagement since it drives emotion. There are different visual elements you can use, we will look at pictures, infographics, and videos.

Pictures in your campaign is a great way to enhance your story and is suitable in all kinds of media. Humans are drawn to pictures with people so to use people in your pictures is always a good thing, especially if you want to highlight a personal story. Showing people supporting your cause also gives more credibility than an anonymously written story. Here is an example of using pictures of people donating to “The Trevor Project” which was a fundraising campaign for suicide prevention and crisis intervention services for young LGBTQ people

<https://www.thetrevorproject.org/2015/11/30/why-folks-are-giving-to-trevor-on-giving-tuesday/>

Here is another example where only photos together with a voice-over and music compose the story of how making balloon hats can unify people.

<https://vimeo.com/7110050>

When you want to deliver the message of a complex situation, problem, and/or solution in a way that your audience will understand and be engaged, an infographic is a perfect tool. With infographics, you can simplify things using images, charts,

diagrams, etc. so these complex conditions can be digestible. Here are some examples of infographics.

<https://www.classy.org/blog/10-nonprofit-infographics-inspire-inform/>

The most influential tool to use is most probably video since it allows you to combine your dynamic story with emotion (and motion) to create a connection with your audience that words and photos cannot build. You don't need to be an expert in video making or have expensive equipment. You can use a smartphone and there are many free video editing programs out there. Below there are some examples of using videos in campaigns. Although these examples of videos may have had a big budget, you can still be inspired by what can be done by using videos in your campaign.

The first example is a video of Karam Foundation who support young refugees with educational activities

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1xvnKy\\_bwjg#action=share](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1xvnKy_bwjg#action=share)

The second video is the story of the founder of the charity organization Water - how and why he started <https://www.charitywater.org/about/scott-harrison-story>

The third video is a fun video made by the Rainforest alliance on what one can do to save the rain forest

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3ilkOi3srLo&feature=emb\\_logo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3ilkOi3srLo&feature=emb_logo)

# When and how visual storytelling should be used

When using visual storytelling you must give the message of authenticity, the visual content needs to feel real and not staged. Take pictures and videos when people are doing things or things are happening for real. This is of course important when you want to share personal stories or show the impact of a cause. It is also important that the visual content make the audience feel something since feelings will more probably make the audience remember the message and also make them act. Also, be sure that the visual content is aligned with your values and ideals and by that making the content relevant for your cause. An important thing is that the audience can identify themselves with the cause by understanding the individuals in the story. You can do this by using a “hero” or “archetype” in the story which people can identify themselves with who takes you on a hero’s journey where the hero or heroine faces difficulties but overcomes them in the end.

It can be easy to be distracted with all the things you can do visually so it is important to stay focused on stories and only include things that will enhance the story.

## Tools to use

There are endless resources to use nowadays to boost your campaign with visual storytelling. Here we will give you just some examples you can use but feel free to search for more options!

For social media content, posters, and more: [www.canva.com](http://www.canva.com), [www.ceros.com](http://www.ceros.com),

For infographics: [www.infogram.com](http://www.infogram.com), [www.piktochart.com](http://www.piktochart.com)

For videos: [www.magisto.com](http://www.magisto.com), [www.filmora.com](http://www.filmora.com)

For presentations: [www.prezi.com](http://www.prezi.com), <http://www.wordcloud.com/>

# Make your storytelling visual!

The magic of using visual storytelling will boost your campaign:

- *Visual storytelling is more attractive for the audience and brings more attention.*
- *Visual storytelling can move people to act since they create emotions*
- *Visual storytelling can more easily create connections and identifications which enables us to relate and share content.*

## A picture is worth a thousand words!

**The powers gained at the end of this mission:**

- *Skills of using digital tools to create a message with an image*
- *Presenting a short story connected to picture/s*
- *The visualization process; from story and data to finished visual*

### **Storytelling wizard**

*When it comes to taking good pictures we will get you some basic tips and instructions.*

*Lightning: You want the light to hit the front of the object your a taking the photo of, not the back. Try to take some photos where the light is coming from different angles to see how light works in taking photos.*

*Rule of thirds: Try to understand where in the picture the object should be. If you divide your picture into nine squares you want the center of the picture to be in the intersections of any two lines.*

*Capture the moment: Be ready with the camera because you never know when just that magic moment comes and makes that perfect photo you have been waiting for.*

*Move around: Use your body and other people's and animals' ways of view. Maybe take a photo from the eyes of a snake? or an eagle?. Test some different angles on the same object and see what happens.*

*ISO: To make it simple:) When an object is still and you have good light LOW iso and when it's the opposite moving and dark use higher iso.*

### **Start your mission here:**

1. Take the mission individually or together with a friend or a group of friends.
2. Come up with a story you want to tell and then use your smartphone or camera and take photos for your story. What is going to happen? Who is it about? What's the smell, light, time, place, and so on. You need to shoot portraits, landscapes, abstract images, wide-angle shots, action shots, zoomed-in details, and so on to tell a whole story. A single image might be very powerful but it's still only a part of the bigger picture. On the other hand, a series of photographs allows a viewer to process each image independently and then connect multiple images into a cohesive storyline. The first and last images in a series are the most important because they have to be strong enough to grab a viewer's undivided attention.
3. Put a social media post together using one digital tool that shows the story.

### **Mission hints**

*Capture the details: What is the story you are telling? Think about what little details you could capture to help tell the story. If you are talking about a recent trip to the farmers market, capture the fruit, prices, scale, and the vendors. When put together, all these little details tell a pretty powerful story!*

*Don't just start in the middle of your story. Capture the very beginning. If you are going on a road trip, capture everyone packing and loading the car. The middle is easy to capture, as that is normally where the bulk of the story is being told. And don't forget the end. After your fun road trip, get everyone sleeping in the car or the pure exhaustion (kids crying is great!) of the fun day!*

*Not all images must contain a human figure or human interaction to be emotionally strong. They can contain anything from a landscape to abstract visuals – the only thing that matters is that they can evoke strong emotions in the viewer's heart.*

*Think carefully about colors. For instance, if you focus on the spectrum of reds that will increase the sensation of joy, intimacy, passion, or pleasure. On the other hand, cold bluish colors will transmit the feeling of calm or perhaps unhappiness and isolation.*

## **Engaging facts with infographics!**

### **The powers gained at the end of this mission:**

- *Skills of using digital tools to convert facts or information into an engaging infographic*

- *The visualization process; from story and data to finished visual*
- *Understanding the role of an infographic and what makes it effective*
- *How to translate a complex issue into an appropriate visual form*

### **Storytelling wizard**

*Let's start by explaining how to make and what an infographic is. An infographic is more than just a pretty picture – it's a valuable tool that communicates data more effectively than text alone. Infographics are liked and shared on social media 3X more than any other type of content. Infographics make it easy to share complex information in just seconds, which is what you need to grab people's attention.*

*Information: Write down the information you want on your infographic. Don't have too many details on it. You want your infographic to be easy to remember. Break the text into pieces. Usually, infographics are split into blocks or bullets, so it will be easy to decide where to go*

*Choose a tool: Choose one of the tools mentioned above. They're all free and easy to use and they come with a lot of tutorials online. If you have the time for it, try them all and keep using the one you like the most. People have different preferences, so it's up to you which one you want to use. All these tools have ready templates so that they make your life easier. Starting from scratch is never easy. It's good to have something to start and then you see how it goes. You can change what you don't like, after all. My pick from the tools for this is Canva!*

*The ingredients: When you have the script, the template, and the tool. All you must do is let your imagination go wild and make something fantastic! Put the script on the infographic and add some graphic elements that make it look better. Any part you can convert completely into an image, do it. Any numbers you have, convert them into charts. In the end, choose colors to make it stand out – but in a good way. (Don't overdo it with the colors and pick colors that match.) Check Canva in the templates section for the infographic and you can use their template or get some ideas for your own.*

### **Start your mission here:**

1. Take the mission individually or with a friend or a group of friends.
2. Choose an informative article, podcast, or information on a website about for example fossil fuels are affecting the earth and its nature and transform the information into an infographic.
3. Amplify it by using a digital tool for infographics to highlight the important parts of the information and to make it more interesting.
4. Present the infographic for a friend or a group of people.

### **Mission tips**

*Try to capture the reader with an Interesting title and subtitles, This is a great way to capture attention, so it's important to generate interest.*

*Guide the reader through the infographic in the right order with the help of arrows or waypoints so they don't get confused, As a general rule, an infographic should start with any necessary background information to give context to the content, then move through the story intuitively. We recommend a 2- to 3-sentence introduction to the whole graphic and 1 to 2 sentences per sub-header.*

*Highlight story findings/insights, it's important to directly call out key takeaways*

*Provide a sound conclusion, once you've presented your story, you want to lead your viewer to the desired conclusion without spelling it out for them.*

## **Drive emotion with video!**

### **The powers gained at the end of this mission:**

- *Skills of using digital tools to make an emotional video for your campaign*
- *The visualization process; from story and data to finished visual*
- *Video editing and story making skills*

### **Start your mission here:**

1. Take the mission individually or with a friend or a group of friends.

2. Use a mobile camera or a real camera to make a story with a clear message.  
Use the story from the previous task or make a new one.
3. Record the movie in small sets of recordings (This makes it much easier in the editing step) Use different angles and distances on the objects.
4. Complete the movie by putting everything together and add music/sound or text to make the story more clear to the viewer.

**Storytelling wizard says:**

*During the early stages of producing a story through video, it's essential to answer some questions that will guide the rest of the process:*

*Plot: What story do you want to tell? What is its structure? (Powerful stories typically consist of an introduction, conflict or complication, and resolution.)*

*Purpose: Why do you want to convey this story to viewers, and what do you want them to do afterward?*

*People: Who are the main characters in your video story? How do they relate to your audience?*

*Place: What's the main location for the video, and how does that place shape the video narrative?*

*Audience: Who will primarily see this video? Who is the target group you want to influence with your campaign video?*

*Distribution method: How will you share the video story with others, and where will it be hosted (i.e. YouTube, your website, somewhere else)?*

*Once you've figured out the answers to these questions, you'll have a solid plan from which you can make the movie. Think about how you can connect to your audience, what techniques would make the video especially memorable to viewers, and what could make it shareable, perhaps even with the potential to go viral.*

*Now you take a step into how the camera works:*

*The view: Use the camera at different angles, zoom, and movement. Try to film a still object in different ways and see what happens. Remember also the lighting, try filming in a different light for different feelings and effects.*

*Sound: A big difference between recording a movie and taking photos is that you have the sound to think of. Sound can be recorded at the same time as you make the video or you can put sound files into the video in an editing program.*

*Editing: When you have recorded your material you edit the movie in a program and there you can put other cool alterations in it like, lightning, sound, faster speed, slow-motion effects, and so on.*

*Storyboard and Planning: When you are going to do a movie you need a plan and structure of what you want and how you want it. Using a storyboard is a great way to get all your scenes planned so you know before you shoot the scene what you are aiming for and want to be recorded. It's like you are doing a comic book with the storyline in each square of the storyboard template.*

## Mission tips

Create a strong story with tension. This makes it easy for audiences to follow along with the story and become involved with the movie, and keep them watching through to the end. Try to hook them in the first seconds!

Make your characters lovable and relatable. People should ideally see parts of themselves in the people of the video.

Edit the video for maximum storytelling effect. If there are aspects of the video that don't do anything to push the story forward, cut them out. It may be useful to have an outside party, ideally, someone who matches your target audience, provide feedback about whether any parts take away from the story rather than adding to it. Make the movie visually beautiful for the eyes. Think about how camera angles, scenery, and everything that could help your video stick in the mind of a viewer and make them want to watch it again.

This is a storyboard template and below is an example that you can use to put your plan for the movie. Start with how you want the movie to end, what message do you want your audience to act



upon in your campaign? Then work your way back to the beginning.

## Learn More:

The Four Principles of Visual Storytelling / Jade Lien November 21, 2019,

<https://amplifinp.com/blog/4-principles-visual-storytelling/>

Five Giving Tuesday Nonprofit Storytelling Examples You Need / Giving Tuesday,  
November 5, 2019

<https://charity.gofundme.com/c/blog/giving-tuesday-storytelling-examples>

Brilliant moments in the visuals of emotion / Cinefix, October 25, 2016

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NDFTFFA0LtE&feature=emb\\_logo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NDFTFFA0LtE&feature=emb_logo)

The power of visual storytelling with infographics / Branding & Marketing, August  
14, 2018

<https://www.123shoot.com/using-infographics-to-tell-your-story/>

How to Create an Infographic People Will Rave About! / Louise Myers, July 21, 2020

<https://louisem.com/94754/how-to-create-an-infographic>

The Basics of Video Storytelling / Neil Davidson, May 16, 2013

<https://www.socialmediatoday.com/content/basics-video-storytelling>

Video Storytelling Basic Techniques: The Ground Rules / NYVS, August 19, 2020

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

Six Pillars of Video Storytelling / James Hamar, June 08, 2018

<https://www.brightcove.com/en/blog/2018/06/six-pillars-video-storytelling>

Visual Storytelling 101 / Film Riot, November 4, 2017

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iWQQgZh9EyE>

Storytelling with pictures: 6 tips and tricks / Evolve systems

<https://evolve-systems.com/storytelling-with-pictures-6-tips-and-tricks/>

Storytelling Using Photography / MICHAEL GABRIEL,

<https://contrastly.com/storytelling/>

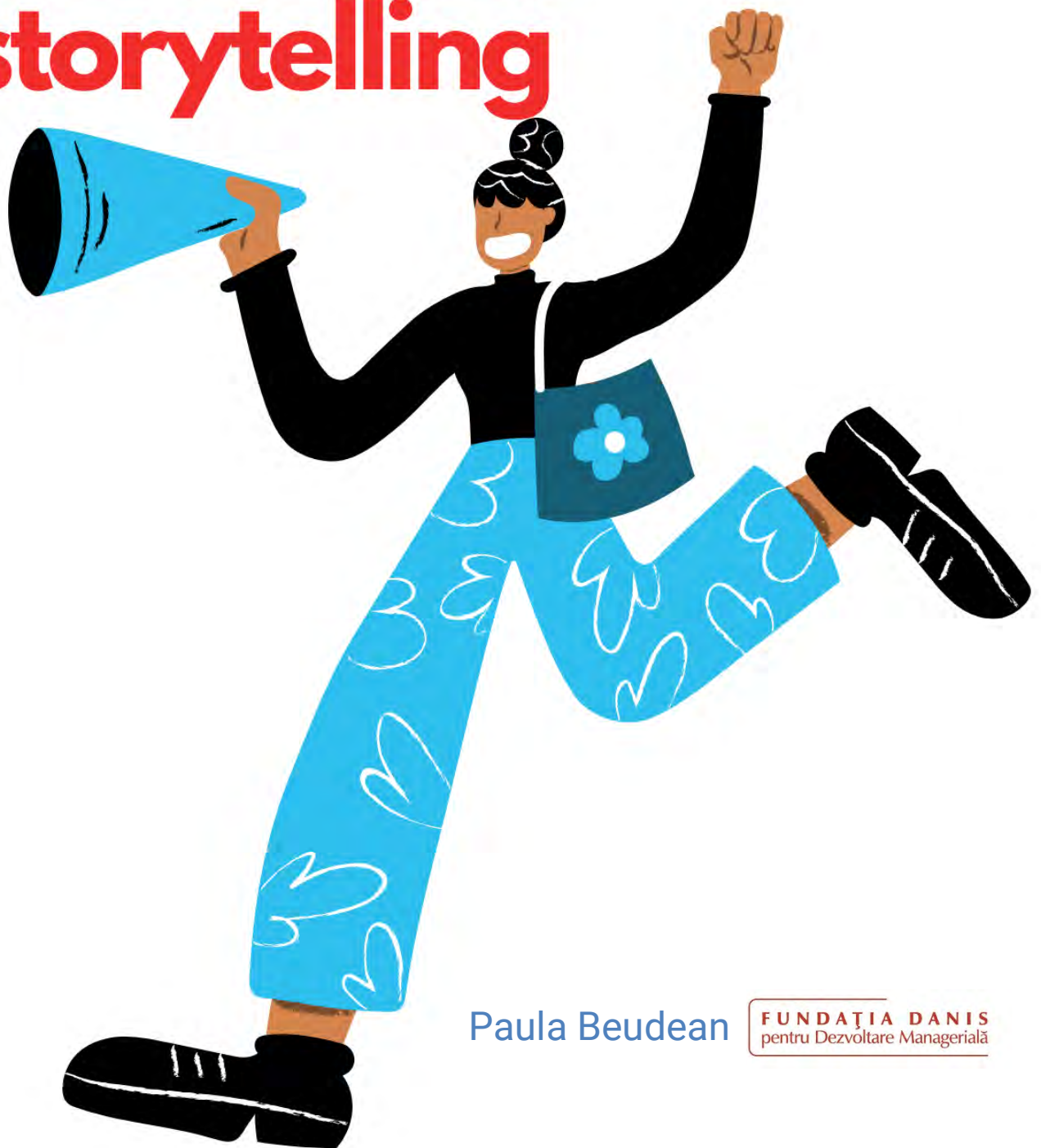
Telling stories with pictures / Linzy Schroder, May 13, 2011

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LyoVX0Ydzvk>

How to make an infographic in 10 steps / Marisa Krystian, august 2, 2017

<https://infogram.com/blog/make-infographic-10-step-guide/>

# Storytelling for advocacy campaigns and transmedia storytelling



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## What can you find in this chapter?

Why should you consider storytelling for your advocacy campaigns? And how can your campaign's story reach diverse audiences through multiple delivery channels? In this chapter, you will discover why and how empathy gives the stories their power in advocacy campaigns and what things you need to consider when using storytelling for advocacy. You will also get a short introduction to transmedia storytelling and some ideas on how to enhance your story's impact through different delivery channels for diverse audiences.

Begin this chapter's journey by learning the essentials about how to use storytelling for advocacy and transmedia storytelling for your campaigns. Then, take the missions alone or with a group of friends to practice the knowledge you acquired and gain new skills. Finally, learn more about the topics related to storytelling for advocacy, transmedia storytelling, or engaging diverse audiences in your campaigns.

## The power of storytelling in advocacy campaigns

As you have already learned in Chapter 5, advocacy campaigns raise public awareness, motivate people to care, or act on relevant public, social, civic, political, economic issues. So, any social marketing or advocacy campaign will serve at least one of the following goals:

- *To educate a specific audience about the issue;*
- *To motivate a specific audience to care about the issue;*

- *To mobilize a specific audience to act upon the issue in a particular direction.*

Your advocacy campaigns are more powerful and reach their goals when you can create a narrative, tell a story, and use empathy to connect with your audience. The empathy feeling - the common understanding you can generate between your message, your story's characters, and your audience - is more powerful than any rational change or policy proposal you propose in your campaign. Your audience, people are moved by emotions, not by facts. This is how our brain works and gets wired when we need to make decisions and act. We do not say to give up facts, data, logic, arguments, but to make sure that you add a story to your advocacy campaign, to the message you want to send there while achieving one of the three goals mentioned above.

By now, you know stories are important, but "it is the empathy that gives stories their power in advocacy and campaign communications" (MobLab, 2012). Empathy is the ability that your audience has to put themselves in another place or time, and understand the world through the eyes of another person, and feel what the story's hero feels.

So, when you use storytelling in an advocacy campaign, keep in mind the following:

- *The story should make the audience feel that your message is right or what you ask them to do feels like the most obvious thing to do and in their power;*
- *The story should let your audience step in the world of your heroes/characters, to feel the problem you want to educate them about or to move them into action to solve it;*

- *Empathy is more complicated than sympathy and compassion. When your audience really step into the story's world, they can completely understand the hero's life, and this has the power of changing the audience's behaviors;*
- *Your story needs to follow the dramatic structure - the beginning showing the problem or the challenge; the middle presenting the tension; and the end finding the resolution. This structure is scientifically proven to keep the audience's focus on the story, immerse in the action, empathize, feel, and act.*
- *Your story should include a moral challenge that your audience is ready to take on or some values that your audience recognize and is prepared to do what the campaign is asking from them;*
- *Design and personalized stories to different audiences, learn what their needs, feelings, assumptions towards the cause are, and build the stories in which they can immerse and finally empathize with (use the Design Thinking method from Chapter 5 to better connect with your audience).*

## **Transmedia storytelling for campaigns**

Transmedia storytelling is a process where elements of a story are disseminated systematically across multiple delivery channels for creating a complete experience of the story for diverse audiences. For example, a story can take the form of a movie, a book, a game, an online platform, Instagram accounts for the characters, etc. The same story, different elements, or side stories of the main story find their way to diverse audiences through many creative communication channels.

Here are *the main elements* to keep in mind when you are developing your transmedia storytelling campaign:

**The story:** Compared to the linear story made available through only one delivery channel, a transmedia story is not limited to a central story; it has many side stories that are part of the *story world*. This world includes stories of characters or events which are related to the central story. For instance, an Instagram account for a character of your campaign can tell the hero's full story, with relevant events of his/her life, which cannot be all included in the central story you tell in the campaign.

**The technology:** This allows you to tell the story in so many different ways - written, drawn/illustrated, filmed, transposed in augmented or virtual reality, etc. Also, the same technology allows you to connect and engage diverse audiences to "use" the story and participate in the co-creation of the story or the act of the story. For instance, you may ask people to send stories for your blog, vlog, or social media channels about their experience regarding your campaign's cause/topic. For instance, they can tell their stories of discrimination, the stories of being abused, or their volunteering stories, etc. Also, through their actions they can "change" the hero's story - for example, the hero can be saved from a difficult situation with the support of the audience's donations. The last thing about tech: when using multiple platforms for your transmedia storytelling campaign, make sure you have enough knowledge and appreciation of what each platform does the best and which audience you want to target.

**The audiences:** In transmedia storytelling, audiences change from passive audience to active audience. They interact with the story by using different "entry points" in joining your campaign: they might see your Youtube video, or the Instagram accounts, or get on your platform, send a text message, etc. They get to decide which channels, thus which experiences they enjoy the most for interacting with your campaign: reading about your campaign, watching a video, playing a game, making a

donation through text messages, following Insta stories, or Tik Tok challenges, etc. Keep in mind that the audience should get access to a full story in that media environment, no matter the entry point.

Here are seven ideas about *how to tell your stories in different ways, using various delivery channels, and about how you can engage diverse audiences* in your campaigns or the story creation process:

- a) Select the key characters of your story or your campaign and show their individual stories through different media channels. For instance, these may be the people affected by the problem or the supporters/the ambassadors of your campaign. You may create video stories, individual Instagram accounts, give them Tik Tok challenges, write their stories on a blog, etc.
- b) Create side stories talking more about the roots of the problem your campaign addresses or about the consequences of the problem: contact media outlets, and let them interview you or relevant experts, send them personal stories showing causes or effects, or both; make a video series of personal stories that support the central story of your campaign; collect stories from your audience and let them get involved in the campaign, etc.
- c) Document the settings of your story, the world of your characters through documentaries, photo reportages, web cameras running continuously (for instance, the cameras following the heroes of one Zoo, such as Pandas), virtual experiences about a certain environment, and give access to your audience to immerse in the story's context.

- d) Educate people about certain aspects of your campaign, about the problem, or about the solution you propose through methods, such as an online workshop or webinar, a play or flash mob on the street, an online game, a Trivia contest, or other types of competitions, etc.
- e) Ask people, volunteers to share the story of your campaign and comment why the campaign is relevant for them with their family, friends, and peers: create “shareable” stories, memos, posters, quotes, etc.; immediately recognize the effort of the volunteers by tagging, or resharing their posts, giving small awards, etc.
- f) Sell or give away merchandise of your campaign, such as pins, t-shirts, mugs, etc. (you can be very creative and develop relevant merchandise for the message and the story of your campaign). Invite people to collect the items and spread the message and the story of your campaign.
- g) Create real or virtual journeys that your audience can take and experience what your characters feel in certain moments of the story to fully immerse themselves in the heroes’ challenges. For instance, you may develop a game or an app in which the audience has to save himself/herself while taking the challenges of a war refugee. You may also see an excellent example of immersive storytelling (360° filming) that helps viewers to feel the fear of Yemen’s children: <https://ajcontrast.com/yemen>.

# Increase your campaigning and transmedia storytelling powers!

## Identify the right story for your campaign

### The powers gained at the end of the mission:

- *In-depth understanding of how stories can serve an advocacy campaign's objectives;*
- *The ability to choose the right story for a specific audience and a particular advocacy campaign goal.*

### The magic of using stories in advocacy:

- *Your audience can easily empathize with the characters and the challenges they have to take in your story, feeling that what you propose is the right thing to do or the real problem that the community should debate about.*
- *The stories allow you to reach for the audience's emotions to make them take action as you advise in your mobilizing campaign.*

### Start your mission here:

1. Consider the teenage pregnancy phenomenon and its negative consequences both on the minor parents and their children. Or choose another topic/problem

that is relevant among your friends, peers, or your community. Research online about the situation in your country.

2. Now that you know a little bit about the issue, its causes and consequences, start brainstorming with a group of friends about three advocacy campaigns aimed:

- a) To educate the teenagers and/or their parents about the problem;
- b) To motivate policy-makers to care more about the phenomenon of teenage pregnancy and talk more about it in the public sphere;
- c) To mobilize young people to engage in peer-to-peer sexual education programs with the support of experts in the field.

What stories could you use to generate the right empathy and reach the goals of your campaigns?

3. Once you have the ideas for the story you could use for each campaign, choose the delivery channels you would like to use to promote your stories to your different audiences: teenagers & parents, policy-makers, respectively young people.

## **Make the plan for a transmedia storytelling campaign**

### The powers gained at the end of this mission:

- *In-depth understanding of the transmedia storytelling principles and benefits.*
- *The ability to transfer a linear story in a transmedia storytelling project.*

### The magic of the transmedia storytelling campaigns:

- *Transmedia storytelling helps you reach and engage your audience in innovative ways, possible now because of the latest tech advancements.*
- *The audience can get more immersed in your campaign and co-create the story, participating more in reaching your advocacy goals.*

### Start your mission here:

1. Choose one of your favorite fairy tales and use The Story Map, which you learned about in Chapter 5, to analyze and deconstruct the story.
2. Now that you have the key aspects of the fairy tale transfer it into a transmedia storytelling project. Use at least five different media to transpose the story.

#### ***Mission hints:***

- *Consider the settings of the story. How can you help the audience to get immersed in the settings/places of the story?*

- *Think about the story's main characters, what kind of additional stories you could tell about them, and in what format?*
- *Analyze the challenge. How can you support the audience to fully understand or empathize with the challenge of the main hero?*
- *Reflect on the resolution of the story. Could the audience influence the end of the story? How can they learn more about the problem and the solution and the story's moral argument?*
- *For choosing the media channels, think about the audiences you would like to reach with your transmedia storytelling and your communication objectives.*

3. Reflect on how the story and the relationship with the audience changed. What are the benefits or disadvantages you see in the transmedia storytelling projects?

## **Brainstorm for creative ways to engage your audiences**

### **The powers gained at the end of this mission:**

- *Creative confidence to generate ideas for engaging diverse audiences in your campaigns.*

## The magic of engaging audiences in the campaigns:

- *Collect stories and ideas from your audience that can support and further disseminate your initial campaign story and message;*
- *Connect better with your audiences and deliver impactful advocacy/storytelling campaigns.*

## Start your mission here:

1. Research online about the #metoo or #blacklivematters campaigns and write down how diverse audiences were involved in disseminating the campaigns' messages or co-create the campaign with their personal stories.

### ***Mission hints:***

*Try to identify several media and social media platforms, and observe how audiences were engaged.*

2. Now, choose a cause you would like to educate people about or motivate them to act and solve a problem in your community.
3. Identify 3-5 ways of engaging diverse audiences from your community to disseminate or directly contribute to your campaign, emphasizing the storytelling component of their engagement.

# Learn more!

## Advocacy and Storytelling

- MobLab. (2012). The Force of Empathy in Advocacy Storytelling. Retrieved from <https://mobilisationlab.org/stories/the-force-of-empathy-in-advocacy-storytelling/>
- Odedra, K. (2019). Want Winning Digital Campaigns? Act Fast, Fail Fast, and Tell Great Stories. Retrieved from <https://mobilisationlab.org/stories/act-fast-fail-fast-tell-great-stories-for-better-digital-campaigns/>
- UNHCR, Innovation Service. (2015). 7 Videos Guaranteed to Change the Way You See Refugees. Retrieved from <https://www.unhcr.org/innovation/7-videos-guaranteed-to-change-the-way-you-see-refugees/>

## Engage audiences

- Zomer, A. (2020). How to Teach Grassroots Organizing and Leadership on WhatsApp. Retrieved from <https://mobilisationlab.org/stories/how-to-teach-grassroots-organising-and-leadership-on-whatsapp/>
- Souweine, D. (2018). How Volunteers Can Make Peer-to-Peer Texting Campaigns Even More Powerful. Retrieved from <https://mobilisationlab.org/stories/volunteers-peer-to-peer-texting-campaigns/>

Read more stories from the practice of advocacy and mobilization campaigns here:

<https://mobilisationlab.org/stories-type/tech-tools-tactics/page/2/>

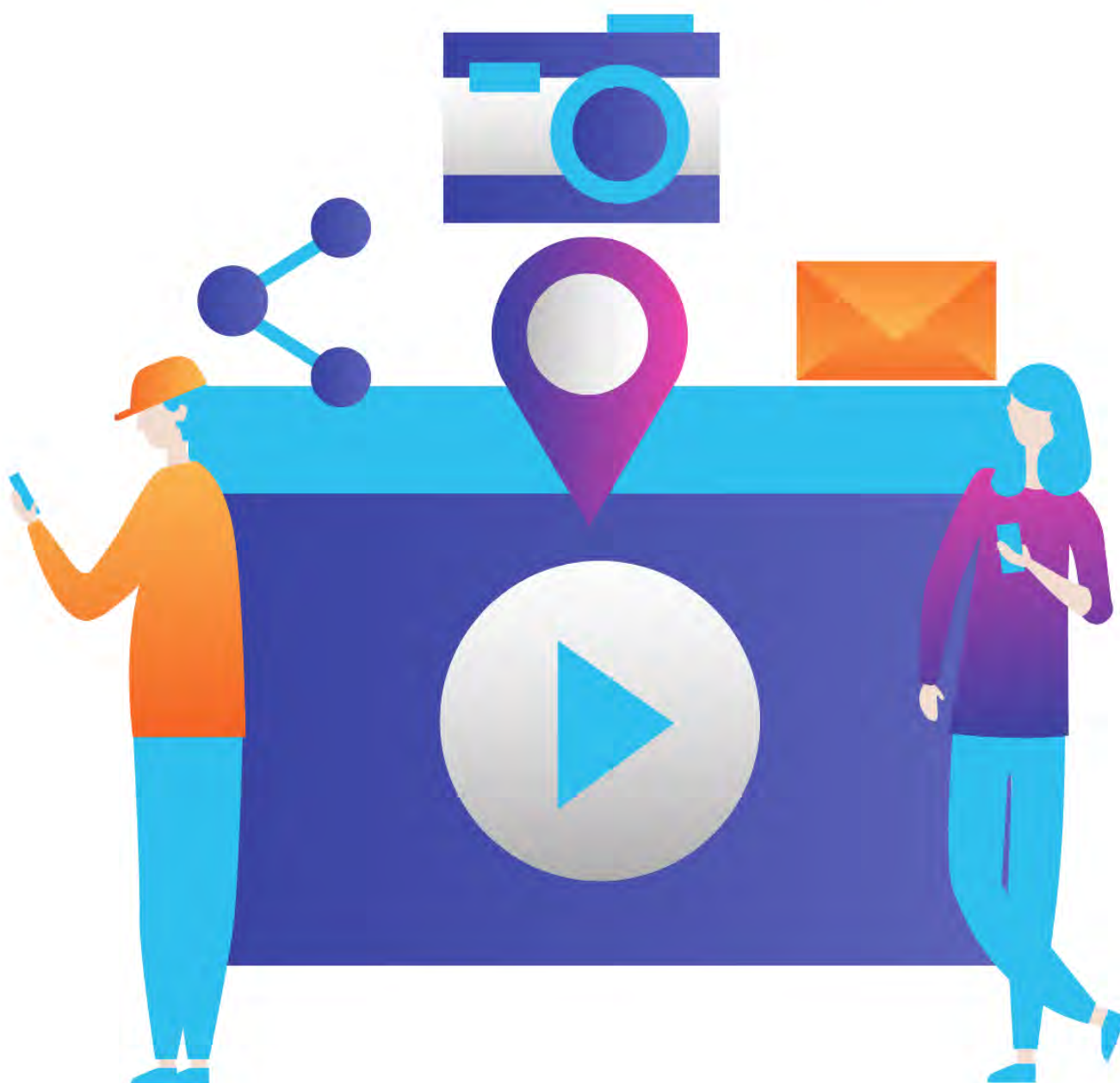
## Transmedia storytelling

- Jenkins, H. (2007). Transmedia Storytelling 101. Retrieved from [http://henryjenkins.org/blog/2007/03/transmedia\\_storytelling\\_101.html](http://henryjenkins.org/blog/2007/03/transmedia_storytelling_101.html)
- Weinreich, N. K. (nd). The Immersive Engagement Model: Transmedia Storytelling for Social Change. Retrieved from <https://www.social-marketing.com/immersive-engagement.html>
- UNSW, Sydney. MOOC - Transmedia Storytelling: Narrative worlds, emerging technologies, and global audiences. The course is available on the Coursera platform: <https://www.coursera.org/learn/transmedia-storytelling>

Desislava Asenova Petar Kanchev



# ICT for storytelling



## What can you find in this chapter?

With the flood of new technologies and digital tools nowadays, communicating your ideas and reaching various audiences has become more accessible than ever. With only a few clicks on your phone, tablet, laptop you can create content that could easily be disseminated online among your friends and even people from all over the world. So, why not utilising this opportunity for your campaigns? Maybe you have an inspiring idea you would like to share with your friends, or you would like to present your personal experience on an interesting topic, or you want to motivate your community for a change and have an impact? Well, creating digital content could be the right thing for you. It could help you establish a strong emotional connection to your topic, inviting people to engage with your campaign/cause and take action. People usually find digital stories great fun and quite engaging, so there is no reason to not give it a try.

Lately, many youth campaigns rely on digital platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and online blogs to encourage youth to advocate for different causes – climate change, equal rights, a preserved environment, and so much more. Presenting your campaign through a digital story, empowers you to become a change agent and to spread awareness of the causes your campaign promotes.

Sounds easy, right? Oh, yes, as long as you know what tools and digital technologies to use and what to keep in mind to successfully create and disseminate your digital story. Keep reading the text below and learn about the digital storytelling concept with its main elements and about how to utilise different tools and digital technologies to effectively communicate your ideas and tell your campaign stories in a unique and engaging way. We will also provide you with a few exercises to test what you have learned in this chapter. Are you in? So, we should better begin!

# ICT and storytelling

The importance of information and communication technology (ICT) today has become widely popular as cameras, laptops, smartphones, and easy-to-use applications and software have become available to young people like you, eager to join the digital world. You and your peers commonly use the web, especially the social web (e.g. Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok), and communicate through memes, short videos, blogs, have mobile connectivity. Learning, listening to music, shopping, and even dating involves the use of ICT not just for gathering information but also for creating and publishing it, most often in a multimedia form.

Digital storytelling is the modern expression of the ancient art of storytelling, representing the act of using computer-based tools and digital multimedia to tell stories. These are stories that make use of photographs, videos, animation, sound, music, infographics, and text. You can use digital storytelling to effectively embody moving messages that could affect diverse audiences. You can also apply it to your campaign as a means to increase public sensitivity and empathy about the topic you would like to promote or as a tool for persuasion, gaining trust, promoting social causes, putting pressure on decision-makers, motivation and influence.

Creating a digital story for your campaign is an exciting experience and takes some time. There are seven elements of digital storytelling you should keep in mind when you develop the story you would like to share with your audience:

**Point of view:** Your story should make a point considering your perspective and your audience and directing the point to them.

**Dramatic question:** It is important to capture and keep your audience's attention by presenting a dramatic question that you are going to resolve by the end of your story.

**Emotional content:** Combine text, images, music, intonation, and audiovisual effects to give emotion to your story.

**Voice:** A voice-over recording could enrich your story.

**Music/Soundtrack:** Adding sound effects to your story could enhance its emotion, tension, and excitement.

**Economy:** Your story should include only the fundamental elements/content to move your audience from beginning to end.

**Pacing:** Try to establish a smooth pace of your story to keep your audience's interest – consider image duration, speech rate, music tempo, etc.

These seven elements have been published by the Center for Digital Storytelling and are considered important in the making of any digital storytelling. Another classification<sup>1</sup> expands and modifies the list to ten elements adding “The overall purpose of the story”, “Quality of the images, video and other multimedia elements” and “Good grammar and language usage” to the seven elements above.

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<sup>1</sup> Robin, B. & Pierson, M. (2005). *A Multilevel Approach to Using Digital Storytelling in the Classroom*.

# Popular formats of digital stories

Digitalisation made storytelling more interactive by enhancing user's experience and making it more personal. Digital stories can be made in different formats, the most popular of which are:

## A video

It would not be a surprise if we tell you that videos are claimed to be the most popular digital storytelling format. You are probably overwhelmed with them on your social media homepages. Videos work particularly well for social media and mobile apps and allow the user to consume information in a visual manner, in a short-span and an easy to share form. Adding sound and subtitles to your video would make it more interesting for your viewers. There are many digital tools available on the web that makes it possible to make amazing videos with all interactive features.

Examples to follow in the next section below.

## Stories with swipeable slides

People nowadays are used to consuming information from smartphones, being accustomed to accessing information that is quick to grasp. Therefore, horizontal stories format where information appears in the form of swipeable slides with brief text and engaging video or visuals is considered one of the best storytelling formats. Swipeable stories create curiosity for the readers, as it makes them wonder what the next slide has to show and thus keeps their attention on the story.

## Web stories

Web stories are the modern format of storytelling introduced by Google. They are visually rich and are similar to Snapchat and Instagram stories, with their content in the form of slides. It is an attention-grabbing format that scores high on user-

engagement metrics. It suits all content forms including news, general information, as well as personal stories.

## Listicles

It is an interesting storytelling format that involves creating lists using catchy yet clear headlines in stories, to captivate readers' attention and let them share it with their friends. It presents interesting and quality content in the form of lists.

## Virtual reality

Virtual reality stories aim to provide an immersive experience to the user and let you be a part of the story, being one of the characters, who will be able to interact with the virtual world.

# What tools and digital technologies you can use to make a story for your campaign?

Before starting creating the digital story for your campaign, you should have a clear plan and idea of its concrete structure. To do this you can try the Story Canvas and Story Maps in Chapter 5.

After you have a detailed script with a clear sequence of scenes and narration, it is time for the magic to happen, making everything come alive. You will need some tools to record your audio and video like a video camera with a microphone, or a simple smartphone. It is a good time to try recording yourself reading the script and rewrite some parts that do not sound good.

There are various computer-based tools and digital technologies you can use to make and tell your story. They allow you to combine audio, video, photos, voice, infographics, etc., and produce cool short movies/videos that represent your story. You do not need to be a professional to make and tell your story digitally. All you need to do is to use simple digital tools and technologies.

There are many different software tools available either online or offline that you can use to develop the visual and audio parts of your digital storytelling. These could be tools to create a presentation (e.g. Microsoft PowerPoint), or a full video project (e.g. Microsoft Moviemaker) that are easy to use, as well as more professional tools such as Adobe Presenter (video making), Adobe Premier (video editing software), etc. Other popular tools and digital technologies you can try are:

**Animoto** (<http://animoto.com/>) – it is a cloud-based video creation service that produces video slideshows from photos, video clips, and music, and customized web-based presentations. You can choose different video templates or start from scratch.

**WeVideo** (<https://www.wevideo.com/>) – an online, cloud-based video editing platform.

**ComicLife** (<http://plasq.com/>) – it is an app with everything you need to make a stunning comic from your own images. Packed with fonts, templates, panels, balloons, captions, and lettering art, Comic Life is a fun, powerful, and easy-to-use app with endless possibilities.

**Adobe Spark** (<https://spark.adobe.com/>) – it is a very easy to use tool for building a one-pager. You can also make animated videos and social graphics.

**Canva** (<https://www.canva.com/>) - it is a graphic design platform, used to create social media graphics, presentations, posters, documents, and other visual content. The app already includes templates for users to use.

**Vyond** (<https://www.vyond.com/>) – it is an online animation software that allows you to easily create cool animated videos for your audience.

**Storyboard That** (<https://www.storyboardthat.com/>) – it lets anyone create their own storyboards and use them as a way to express and tell stories in a more meaningful way. You can choose from a variety of animations and graphics so that you can create unique content.

**GarageBand** (<https://www.apple.com/mac/garageband/>) – an app for Mac computers that works as a fully equipped music creation studio. It has a complete sound library that includes instruments, presets for guitar and voice, and an incredible selection of session drummers and percussionists. It allows users to create music or podcasts.

**Audacity** (<https://www.audacityteam.org/download/>) - is a free, easy-to-**use**, multi-track audio editor and recorder.

**Pixlr** (<https://pixlr.com/>) – an online photo editor that lets you edit photos and create great designs right in your browser for free. Start from an empty canvas or select one of the professionally crafted templates that the platform provides.

If those are not enough for you, you can also check any of the recommended tools in the links below:

**Free music websites**

<http://www.adweek.com/digital/royalty-free-music/>

### *Video editing apps*

<https://adespresso.com/blog/best-video-editing-apps/>

### *Free sound effects websites*

<https://www.online-tech-tips.com/computer-tips/free-sound-effects/>

### *Free-stock photos websites*

<https://blog.snappa.com/free-stock-photos/>

It is important to note that when you make your digital story you should be aware of the copyright rules. We know it would be tempting to use photos, videos, or music you have found on the Internet, but keep in mind that many of these items may be protected by copyrights. Check the items you want to use and in case they are protected, ask the author or the website for permission to include them in your story.

You can find some illustrative examples of using pictures, infographics, and videos to tell stories for your campaign in Chapter 6.

## **Publish, share and review your digital story**

Once you have your digital story ready in a video format, you need to create a "home" for it to "live in". Since video files are often too large to be shared via e-mail, the best space for your product would be online. It could be social media pages, a personal website or blog, or a hosting tool such as YouTube, Vimeo, etc. We recommend you create an online "home" for your video and directly share links with your audience.

Note that you should carefully choose the communication channels that connect you with your target audience. Definitely, social media tools are the perfect avenues to

share stories to get instant feedback and promote agency and self-expression among young people. However, not each social media works for each target group. For example, while a majority of adults use Facebook and YouTube, younger adults (18-24 years old) are more active on Instagram and Snapchat. Taking some time to make research of the social media preferences of the audience you seek to reach out by your campaign could be of great benefit for its success.

Now that you have your story ready and shared with your target audience, it is time to check its impact and how engaging it was. You can collect details about how many people viewed your video, you can check comments as well as data about how your story was received and shared. There are many things you can review to assess if your video accomplished the aim of your campaign.

You first need to check whether your story has reached the right people. Depending on the channels you have chosen to disseminate your story, you can use social media statistics (Facebook, Instagram, YouTube have ways for users to understand how people are engaging with their content – number of likes, comments), e-mail statistics (you can check how many times people you have sent an e-mail to have opened it and how often they clicked through to the video) and traffic statistics (you can use Google Analytics or a similar tool to monitor if people are clicking on your stories, how much time they spend on your video, do they download or share it) to get an idea of who and how many you have reached.

You can also check how your story, respectively campaign, has influenced your audience through an easy poll or a survey on social networks. Reviewing what has been said about your story/campaign online or directly asking people with whom you have shared it could be other useful options to collect feedback.

After collecting all the feedback described above you will be able to evaluate your story and campaign, reflect on what worked and what did not work. Think about the things you could have done differently and pay attention to them next time you develop digital storytelling for your campaign.

# Master your digital storytelling powers!

## Develop a digital story

You can practice the exercise on your own or with a group of friends to be more fun.

You will learn how to use the Spark Adobe tool available at

<https://spark.adobe.com/sp/>.

### The powers gained at the end of the mission:

- *Understand how to use a specific digital story tool to create engaging materials*

### Start your mission here:

5. You start this mission with a clear idea of the topic/issue/challenge/cause you would like to make a campaign about. Scratch a script about your digital story – what the story's main message would be, who would be the main characters, what would you use (pictures, short videos, voice, music, text), what would be the sequence of appearance, etc.

#### ***The Storytelling Wizard says:***

*You can use some of the methods presented in Chapter 6 of the Storytelling Handbook to make a plan/script for your digital story.*

*Either try to work with Story Canvas or the Story map.*

5. Spend some time looking for relevant free pictures, videos, music, using some of the websites mentioned in the theory part of this chapter. You can also

make all these on your own by using a camera, a sound recorder, and even your smartphone.

***The Storytelling Wizard says:***

*If you decide to take pictures on your own you should better check the tips and instructions presented in the mission's section in Chapter 6. You will learn about choosing the right light for your photo, deciding where to place your main object, how to capture the right moment for the photo, you name it. You do not need to be a professional to make good pictures to make your story live.*

5. Proceed with getting introduced to the Spark Adobe web-based tool. Have a look at its interface, at its functions, templates, menus. Try to check every functionality of the tool to ensure that you get the best of it to make your story.

***The Storytelling Wizard says:***

*In case you have some difficulties with the programme you can always look for tutorials on YouTube or any other channel.*

5. Go to the main menu and choose the format of your story – whether it is going to be a flyer, an Instagram story/post, a Facebook post, a video, etc. Give a title to your story (if you haven't decided on that yet, write just a word, you can always change it later). Choose between the two options – a template or start from scratch.

5. Start adding all the materials you already have for your story (audio, visual, and video materials) following your script. You can also add text and/or voice to make your story more appealing.

***The Storytelling Wizard says:***

*Maybe you have noticed that most of the videos that you see on your homepage on Facebook or Instagram, for example, do not start their sound automatically, but you should turn it on yourself. Therefore, most of them have subtitles or text showing on the screen, so that users can see their message even with a sound off. Consider adding any of these to your video as well.*

After you have finalised your product, download it in an appropriate format (most often it is Mp4 for a video file).

And, voilà! Now you have your digital story ready to be disseminated among your audience.

## **Disseminate a digital story**

### **The powers gained at the end of the mission:**

Learn how to publish and disseminate your story among the right target audience

Learn how to monitor and assess the impact of your digital story

### **Star your mission here:**

1. It is now time to create a “home” for your digital story so that you can directly share links with your audience. Choose between social media pages, a

personal website or blog, or a hosting tool such as YouTube, DropBox, Google Drive, etc.

***The Storytelling Wizard says:***

*If you give up using any of the hosting tools mentioned above only because you do not have an account there and you have not used it so far, do not! Making an account takes no more than 1 minute, and uploading stuff there is really easy, so do not be afraid to give it a chance.*

2. Think of who you would like to share your story with – it could be either your friends, your classmates, your teachers, public authorities, your community, etc. Based on your audience you choose the communication channel to reach them.

***Mission hints:***

*Since social media is the most popular way to reach people globally nowadays, you can choose to upload your story there. Just remember that if you choose Facebook or Instagram and you would like to check in the end how many people have been reached by your publication/video or how many people clicked on it, you have to make a Facebook page for your campaign and post everything there or make an Instagram business account. The case is that statistics are not available for ordinary personal accounts activities.*

*So, in case you decide to use Facebook and check the statics, later on, you should create a Facebook page for your campaign. You can give it the same title as the title of your campaign and add a few lines in the page description section, explaining the idea*

*behind your campaign. You can also directly invite people from your target group to like your page so that you ensure they are aware of the existence of your campaign.*

3. Think of adding a hashtag to your story so that it would be easier for people to track you. You can also tag some specific people or institutions you would like to pay attention to your campaign.
4. Wait for two weeks and check your digital story's success.

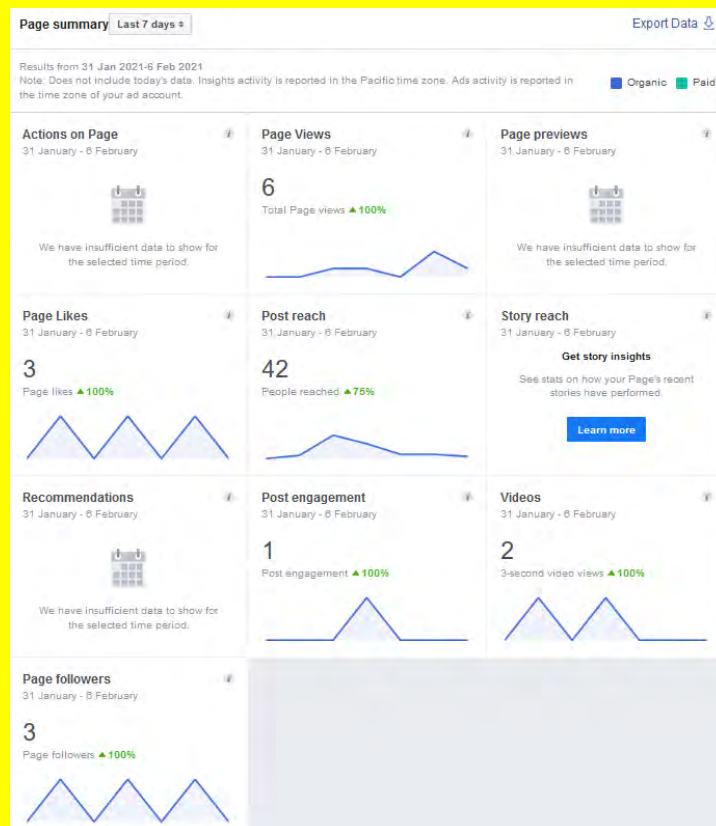
#### ***Mission hints:***

*As mentioned above, you can easily track your post's activity and engagement by using social media statistics. For Facebook pages, you can find the "Insights" section on the left side of the page when you scroll down. You should see this screen:*



*If you click on "See all" you will find detailed information on page views, page likes, post reach, post engagement, etc., choosing a concrete period:*

*And you can even get personalised statistics for each of your posts:*



**Your 5 Most Recent Posts** Create Post

Reach: Organic/Paid Post clicks Reactions, comments & shares

Published	Post	Type	Targeting	Reach	Engagement	Promote
15/01/2021 11:25				10	0 1	<a href="#">Boost Post</a>
05/01/2021 11:30				11	1 0	<a href="#">Boost Post</a>
05/01/2021 10:34				9	3 0	<a href="#">Boost Post</a>
26/11/2020 16:27				12	2 0	<a href="#">Boost Post</a>
26/11/2020 12:25				13	1 0	<a href="#">Boost Post</a>

[See All Posts](#)

*Thus, you can follow the engagement for every post on your page.  
 Isn't it cool?*

- In case you would like to check whether your campaign and respectively story has achieved any impact on people, you can always disseminate a short

survey with guiding questions that would allow you to draw some relevant conclusions.

***The Storytelling Wizard says:***

*There are many user-friendly online tools you can use to make your survey. We recommend Google Forms which is a free access tool. Go to the link <https://www.google.com/forms/about/>, click on "Personal" Forms, and get started. You can either choose a template for your survey from the "Template Gallery" or create a survey with a blank background. Add your questions, either open or closed ones, click "Finish" and your survey is ready. You can copy the link and post it on your Facebook page so that everyone can see it and fill it in, if interested.*

## **Dazzle your campaign audience with a powerful animated story**

### **The powers gained at the end of this mission:**

- Use top-notch and beginner-friendly software tools for creating powerful animated stories.
- Dazzle your audience with purposeful, character-driven, and emotional animated content.

### **The magic of animated stories for your campaigns:**

- Animation has been among the most influential art forms in the entertainment industry since the rise of cinema in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Even

though it started as a medium that primarily targets children, more modern adaptations cater to all audiences.

- Animated stories are fun, powerful, and memorable. Well-crafted characters, such as Mikey Mouse, Bugs Bunny, Homer Simpson and many others can become iconic cultural phenomena, spanning across generations.
- Live-action motion pictures and videos are grounded in reality and might require substantial budgets and participants to pull off, if too ambitious. In contrast, there is no limit to realizing one's creativity with animated stories. You want to send your audience on a voyage across the globe, to other planets, or even on to your own fantasy world? No problem. You want to use sports cars, space ships, or fantastic creatures to deliver your message? No problem. You want to depict something abstract, original, and crazy that only exists in your imagination? No problem!

### Start your mission here:

1. This mission can be completed either alone or in a team. It requires you to have a clear idea about your campaign subject, goals, and audience.

*Mission hints:*

*Nowadays there are animated stories suitable for audiences of all ages and backgrounds. "Zootopia" and "WALL-E", for example, discuss serious social issues, relevant for children and adults alike. Franchises such as "South Park", on the other hand, specifically target adults and are not suitable for children.*

2. Find a tool that suits your style and preferences. Vyond (<https://www.vyond.com/>) is a great beginner-friendly online animation software with a large variety of pallets, templates, and tutorials that can be used for telling powerful stories and engaging the audience's emotions. It offers a 2-week free-trial that might be enough for creating a relatively short

animation video, after which it requires a subscription fee. Alternative tools with completely free plans include Powtoon

(<https://www.powtoon.com/?locale=en>), Renderforest

(<https://www.renderforest.com/animation-maker>), and Moovly

(<https://www.moovly.com/students>). You could also search the web for

others. Check the art styles and templates of several tools and choose the one that you like the best.

3. Explore your playground. In order to become confident and set yourself free from stress, it would be extremely useful to get familiar with your chosen software tool *before* starting to work your purposeful animated story. Explore the tool freely and without purpose, play around with the different palettes and templates, get inspired by tutorials and showcased example videos. Try out some ideas, but don't get bogged by too much structure and perfectionism at this point. Think of this step as an opportunity to play freely in the sandbox, without necessarily having to build the perfect castle. Set your imagination loose, have fun, and don't be afraid to get goofy and ridiculous. That's how original ideas come to life!
4. Choose a point of view that gives your story purpose and engages your audience's empathy. The point of view should be relevant for the message you want to convey, while also relatable to your audience. For example, if your campaign aims to raise awareness about the struggles of refugees, tell your story through the eyes of a refugee with similar age and interests to your audience, or to your audience's children. Maybe they also want to go to school, play sports, and hang out with their friends, but due to war or famine they no longer have that luxury, and so they need a new home.
5. Ask a dramatic question at the beginning of the video that grabs your audience's attention and hooks them until the end. What are your main character's worries, pains and struggles? Do they have to resolve an inner conflict or deal with dangerous external circumstances? Say your protagonist becomes a witness of

cyberbullying, perpetrated by their best friend, who just helped them cheat on the math exam. Would they challenge or betray their friend, in order to help the victim? Don't ask the dramatic question directly. Rather, show the protagonist's inner conflict by animating their emotions and behaviours. The audience will get it.

6. Add emotional content that enhances your message and your protagonist's journey. Animation software tools offer various templates, depicting different story settings, ideas, and plots, as well as extensive libraries with music and ambient sounds. Choose and modify the content that fits your story the best. Add relevant motion animations, emotional expressions, and lip synched voiceover to your characters to truly bring them to life.
7. Economize your story. Remember that you are creating a short animated video that aims to deliver a clear message. Focus only on the key points and don't make your story overly long or confusing.
8. Pace your story properly, in order to keep your audience's attention. Use music and imagery that fit each scene's mood and transition smoothly between scenes.

***The Storytelling Wizard says:***

*Starting out on a white canvas can be quite daunting, especially when it comes to using a new software tool. Here are a few key steps to get comfortable with any animation software:*

*Search for templates that fit your ideas for a campaign story and put them together into a single working space. Play around with them and try out different potential scene orders. This is an effortless way to quickly generate story content, without knowing anything about animation. ☺*

*Next, modify the templates, so that they are even more relevant to your story and your creative style. This will also help you learn the tool's features. Create characters with original facial expression, hairstyles, and clothes, make them engage in fun and surprising actions, change their surroundings, record weird and unique voices for them. Add various tunes and ambient sounds. Be creative and try out as many different combinations as you want.*

*When you get stuck, take your time and don't panic. Animation tools often have a bunch of different panels and settings and finding all of them can be difficult at first. However, they are designed to help you bring your animation to life, so if you can think of something, they probably have it. Look for additional settings at the top edges of the screen, if you can't find what you are looking for. Watch tutorials and contact online support, if available.*

## Learn more:

Adobe YouthVoice (2015). *Digital storytelling curriculum: telling my own story*.

[http://youthlearn.org/wp-content/uploads/AYV\\_Curriculum\\_DigitalStorytelling\\_packaged.pdf](http://youthlearn.org/wp-content/uploads/AYV_Curriculum_DigitalStorytelling_packaged.pdf)

Breakenridge, D. (2018). Power of digital storytelling: A guide for nonprofits to engage youth to become change agents.

<https://www.deirdrebreakenridge.com/power-of-digital-storytelling-a-guide-for-nonprofits-to-engage-youth-to-become-change-agents/>

Byrne, R. (2019). Ten Digital Storytelling Tools for Students of All Ages. URL: <https://practicaledtech.com/2019/08/26/ten-digital-storytelling-tools-for-students-of-all-ages/>

Center for digital storytelling (n.d.) Digital storytelling for youth. URL: [http://electronicportfolios.org/academy/digitalstorysite/training/workshop-handouts/CDS\\_YOUTH\\_HANDOUT.pdf](http://electronicportfolios.org/academy/digitalstorysite/training/workshop-handouts/CDS_YOUTH_HANDOUT.pdf)

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# Immersive storytelling



# What will you learn in this chapter?

In this chapter, you will learn what immersive storytelling is and how it can help you to engaging and user centered storytelling experiences. You will first get a short introduction to elements of immersive storytelling, available tools you can use to create your first immersive stories. Moreover, you will practice to create you first immersive story.

## Introduction to Immersive storytelling

Immersive storytelling is one of these days' fancy buzzwords. But like the majority of those hyped terms, there are very few people who really understand what it really is and is not, and is capable of. For this, we will provide a comprehensive introduction to this very exciting form of storytelling.

To start with, it is important to remember an important point about human being's relation to storytelling: *We are story driven animals*. Our brains are biologically wired for stories to connect and communicate. That is how we are mostly defined as storytellers. A storyteller's ultimate goal is to fully engage or "immerse" the audience in their story. That is why we have been always looking for new ways to tell our stories more engagingly since ancient times. Storytelling that can find a form in a cave drawing or today's high tech cinema productions all seek this objective by constantly redefining the best way to tell engaging stories.

Immersive storytelling is an outcome of this attempt and it becomes more popular these days with the help of new technological advancements such as AR and VR. But first thing first, what exactly is "immersive storytelling"? How is it different from what we call as "classic", "linear" or "conventional" storytelling we are mostly used to from

all kinds of mainstream stories from different media channels such as newspapers, books, social media and movies?

Hugh Dyar (1) defines immersive storytelling as a mediated storytelling system such that “audience” takes an active role as the story unfolds and potentially influences what happens even if progress along predetermined paths. In another word, the audience has the power to make decisions and have actions to shape the flow of the story. In conventional storytelling, the story is separate from the audience. Whether reading a written story, hearing a storyteller, or watching a video story, the audience is a passive consumer of what the storyteller provides.

Pamela Hogle defines how immersive storytelling is different from traditional one with the following words:

"A traditional story follows a narrative arc. It's linear. An immersive story is non-linear, and the results are partly or wholly under participants' control. In a fully immersive environment, the characters can influence what happens and when. Even in a less interactive environment, a 360-degree video, for example, the learners control where they look, what they notice, and often, where they move. The experience is different for each participant." (2)

Another difference suggested by Hogle is the viewpoint in the story. The audience in a traditional story has the viewpoint offered by only the creator of the story. In such a traditional story, we can have the viewpoints of a narrator, a character, or by several characters. But the audience still doesn't select a viewpoint or influence other characters' behavior or perspective with their choice.

On the other hand, the audience in an immersive story might interact with other characters, experience the story from different perspectives and have a more diverse experience in the story.

## **Immersive story in practice**

One of the best early examples of this type of immersive storytelling is the famous "Choose Your Own Adventure", or "Secret Path Books" series of children's gamebooks. In these books which became popular in the 70s, the story is written from a second-person point of view, with the reader assuming the role of the protagonist and making choices that determine the main character's actions and the plot's outcome. The series was based upon a concept created by Edward Packard and originally published by Constance Cappel's and R. A. Montgomery's Vermont Crossroads Press as the "Adventures of You" series, starting with Packard's Sugarcane Island in 1976.

When we come to today, we can see examples of immersive storytelling in many forms thanks to today's immersive technologies. They can be in the form of 360 video, AR, VR, certain presentations of hypertext, or other 'IF' forms. Immersive theater, interactive theater, improv, hypercomics, video games, and interactive videos. But as we noted at the beginning, using one of these technologies does not make every content immersive storytelling.

Glenn McClann, creator of "The Wyr Deception", emphasizes that immersive storytelling is not just a cross-platform media using one of those immersive technologies or simply interactive content on social media, rather it's an online

compelling experience, which places the user as part of the story. McClann further notes that the idea of immersive storytelling is not new but the technological tools allowing immersive storytelling is giving a rich nurturing environment for developing more immersive story experiences today.

## **Some good examples of immersive storytelling in different forms**

As immersive storytelling tools become more accessible and popular, it is used by journalists, film makers, advertising agencies and social media leaders. Here are some of the good examples from different fields:

**Collisions- VR Film:** Collisions is a virtual reality journey to the land of indigenous elder Nyarri Morgan and the Martu tribe in the remote Western Australian desert. Nyarri's first contact with Western culture came in the 1950's via a dramatic collision between his traditional world view and the cutting edge of Western science and technology. 65 years later Wallworth carried cutting edge video technology into the desert so Mr. Morgan could share his story. Reflecting on the event, in this most magical of immersive experiences, Nyarri offers to viewers his experience of the impact of destructive technology and the Martu perspective on caring for the planet for future generations.

**Her Story (2015):** Her Story is an interactive movie game, focusing on a series of seven fictional police interviews from 1994. As the game begins, the "audience" is presented with an old desktop, which contains several files and programs. Among the programs are instructional text files, which explain the game's mechanics the

story. There's a murder case and you as the audience are the detective. The game itself is a bank of video footage. The whole game revolves around your decisions to follow up leads.

UN refugee crisis project (2015): This story example is unique as it has a social purpose. In 2015, the UN partnered with Unicef Jordan, Samsung and Vrse.works to create a virtual reality experience that would transport the world's top decision makers to a Syrian refugee camp, so that they could experience the situation first hand. Their goal was to "connect donors with Syrians affected by the war and inspire world leaders to make bold commitments".

Black Mirror: Bandersnatch: Black Mirror: Bandersnatch is a 2018 interactive film in the science fiction anthology series Black Mirror. The film premiered on Netflix in 2018.

In Bandersnatch, viewers make decisions for the main character, the young programmer Stefan Butler, who is adapting a fantasy gamebook into a video game in 1984. Other characters include: Mohan Thakur and Colin Ritman, who work at a video game company, Stefan's father Peter, and Stefan's therapist, Dr. Haynes. A postmodernist work with free will as a central theme, the film was named after a real video game planned for release by Imagine Software in 1984, the game in turn named after a bandersnatch creature of Lewis Carroll's creation.

The Wait Germany: At the University of California, Berkeley's Graduate School of Journalism, two students experimented with 360-degree video as a way to explore the emerging medium and its potential to create empathy. Their master's project, The Wait [<https://thewaitgermany.com/>], explores the refugee crisis in Europe by

focusing on the lives and challenges immigrants face in Germany waiting for asylum. This new-media project includes text, animation, interviews, and 360-degree video.

Five Minutes- <http://www.fiveminutes.gs/>: One of the finest examples of interactive webstorytelling. Live action & HTML5 experience that blurs the line between a zombie game and branded interactive film. Written & directed by Maximilian Niemann and produced by Felix Faißt and Jonas Kirchner with a student team at Filmakademie Baden-Württemberg.

The Door: Together with Plan International Sweden Ivar Studio developed a concept to let you enter a refugee camp through a portal – using AR. By putting a blue door in the middle of Sergel's Square in Stockholm they gave passers by the opportunity of entering this doorway and a digital AR portal straight to a refugee camp in Nyarugusu, Tanzania – to bring the issue of children rights into people's attention on a regular day.

Pokémon Go: Pokémon Go, a game that quickly captured everyone's attention and given them a reason to go out into nature, walk around, and catch Pokémon. The game is one of the best examples of augmented reality storytelling and uses GPS to mark your location and move your in-game avatar, while your smartphone camera is used to show Pokémon in the real world.

After these examples, some of you might still ask why you should bother about immersive storytelling. Here are some good grounds to understand why to tell stories this way as suggested by Hugh Dyar and CMO:

First, let's remember that these story experiences are unique and empower the audience. The interactions that immersive storytelling gives the user may not affect the plot, but they do affect the way the audience feels about the world.

This way the audience feels more invested in a story faster than with traditional linear storytelling methods. Immersive storytelling tools don't replace traditional storytelling but augment and enhance it.

No other medium has the potential to provide the viewer with a fully-immersive narrative-led experience (3).

If you are convinced and motivated to start your first immersive storytelling production, here are some good resources to start with:

Eko.com: A platform where you can find interactive videos and also create your own interactive videos.

(1) <http://stuckinspheres.com/immersivestorytelling/thenarrativeparadox/>

(2) <https://learningsolutionsmag.com/articles/create-compelling-elearning-with-immersive-storytelling>

(3) <https://thecmoshow.filteredmedia.com.au/immersive-storytelling-frontier-of-virtual-reality/>

# Increase your immersive storytelling powers here!

## Interactive stories vs. linear stories Mission

### The powers gained at the end of this mission:

- *Knowledge about building interactive stories.*
- *Creative confidence in engaging the audience in very diverse ways.*

### The magic of interactive stories for your campaigns:

- *Interactive stories transform passive audiences into engaged audiences. Interactive stories transfer specific power and control to the audience, getting people more involved and interested in the story's topic.*
- *Interactive narratives provide diverse story perspectives through which you can manage to address different audiences' needs and curiosities.*
- *Use interactive storytelling and add follow-up activities to your story to get more commitment and engagement from your audience.*

### Start your mission here:

1. Choose a short classic linear story that you would like to transform into a non-linear and interactive story. To understand and practice the process, you may choose one of the bedtime stories you listen to as a child.

***The Storytelling Wizard says:***

*If it's your first time transforming a linear story into an interactive one, choose a short story with few characters and a simple plot. Also, set your mind for developing such a story in the digital world that provides so many possibilities to get your audience engaged in the story!*

2. Analyze and establish the beginning-the middle-the-end moments of the story. Now, set these moments on a circle (as opposed to a line/timeline), and think how the middle and the end could also be transformed into the story's "entry points".

***Mission hints:***

*To understand the idea of different "entry points" in the story, here is an example with three entry points for the story of the Little Red Riding Hood:*

- 1) The beginning: The Little Red Riding Hood missing her grandmother asks her mom to let her visit her and start her journey through the forest;*
- 2) The middle: The Little Red Riding Hood is distracted by flowers and butterflies in the woods, leaves the path, and meets the big bad wolf. Then the audience can go back in time to understand how the little girl got there;*
- 3) The end: At the grandma's house, the hungry wolf is about to attack the Little Red Riding Hood. The audience can then go back in time to learn what happened in the story and find out how it ends.*

3. Identify the main characters of the story and think about their “own stories” in the story. Also, think about how you could include these “extra narratives” in the interactive story you build and how the audience could access them.

***Mission hints:***

*What narratives can you provide for the Little Red Riding Hood or the Wolf or Grandma? And how can you build these narratives and engage the audience?*

- *You might develop the profile of the characters or provide some information about their history in the community, which the audience can discover behind a link, or in a special section of your digital story;*
- *Think about what different perspectives or aspects of the story you want to include in the story. You could reveal the characters' motivations to the choices they made in the story - why the Little Red Riding Hood leaves the path? Why the Big Wolf attacks people? Why the grandma lives alone?, etc.*
- *You may want to combine these extra narratives or the different perspectives of the story with the various entry points. For instance, if the audience chooses to enter the story at “the end”, they could find out the story from the wolf's perspective.*
- *You could think to present the extra stories in the forms of pop-up stories, an Instagram account of one of the characters, video testimonials of people from the village that know the Little Red Riding Hood or the wolf, etc. Choose these interactive ways of presenting the story based on what the audience would enjoy and what would make them curious enough to “go and explore” them and get the full story.*

4. Identify the main moments of the story, when the main characters make essential choices and think about how these could be transformed in moments that the audience makes those choices for the characters.

***The Storytelling Wizard says:***

*It's better if you take a big sheet of paper and map out your story, by identifying the "nodes" of your interactive story and the branches of the story. Build your first interactive story with 3-4 nodes and no more than two branches for each node.*

5. Decide if you want your story to have only one end or multiple ends. When should you choose one end, two, or multiple ends?
  - *When you chose to transform an already existing linear story, such as a fairy tale or a real story that illustrates the impact of the problem you want to solve in your community, then you might want to keep only one end to your story - the "real" one in the case of your campaign, or the one that provides the moral lesson/the life lesson, in the case of the fairy tale. Also, the choices the characters make, based on what the audience chooses for them, should be in line with the personality traits of the characters: the Little Red Riding Hood gets easily distracted and forgets about listening to her mom's advice; the wolf is a predator, and when he is hungry he does not give up easily to his potential meals.*
  - *When you build an interactive story from scratch, for instance, to mobilize people to take action on climate change, then you can choose to have two or more ends. If the audience makes "good" choices for its characters, the Earth might be saved, but if the audience makes "bad" choices for their characters, the Earth might end badly.*

Remember: this moment and the previous one are those in which you put your audience in a powerful position to decide on the story, on which multimedia content they want to view/read, and in which order.

**Mission hints:**

*Examples for nodes and branches in the Little Red Riding Hood story:*

- 1) The Little Red Riding Hood meets the wolf in the forest*
- 2) The wolf meets grandma*
- 3) The Little Red Riding Hood meets the wolf at the grandma's house*

*Examples of branches for the first node - 1) The Little Red Riding Hood meets the wolf in the forest.*

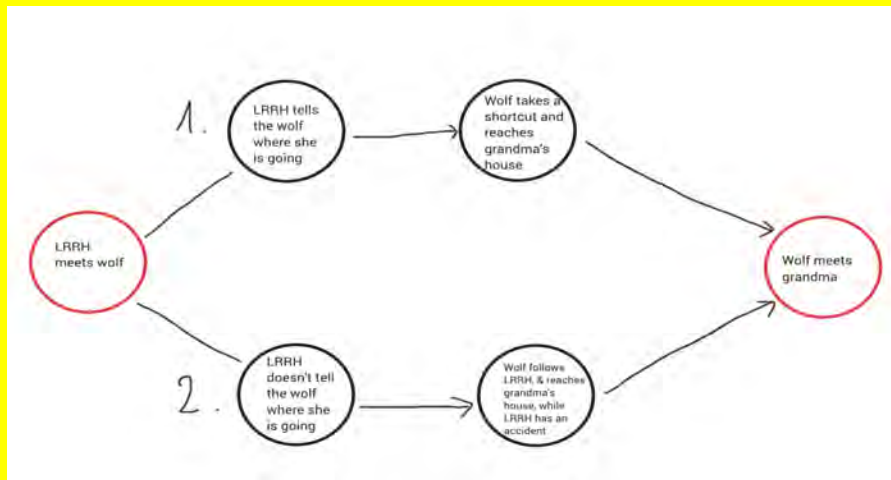
*a) If the audience chooses: The Little Red Riding Hood tells the wolf about her reason to be in the forest and where grandma lives, then:*

- The wolf takes the shortcut to grandma's house and meets grandma.*

*b) If the audience chooses: The Little Red Riding Hood does not share with the wolf her reason to be in the forest and where grandma lives, then:*

- The wolf follows Little Red Riding Hood in the forest; when the little girl is close to the grandma's house, distracted by a butterfly, she falls in the small river from the forest and stays in the sun to*

*dry her clothes before returning to the path; meanwhile, the wolf gets to the grandma's house and meets grandma.*



6. Help the audience to understand the story better! Think about what other information you could add to the story and how the audience can discover this. Let them explore the environment, the history, relationships among characters, statistics about similar incidents, opinions of experts, possible solutions to the story, etc.

### ***Mission hints:***

*Examples of things that the audience can explore in Little Red*

*Riding Hood's story:*

- 1) When the little girl walks in the forest, the audience can listen to the "secret history of the forest" that the trees could share;*
- 2) The users could check the map of the village, the forest, and the grandma's house;*
- 3) The hunter can provide statistics of the wolf's attacks in the forest.*

7. Don't let the story ends! Brainstorm about how you can engage the audience once they finished exploring the story.

***The Storytelling Wizard says:***

*Here are some ideas for you:*

- *Invite the audience to comment on the story, give advice, provide possible solutions so that this kind of incidents never happen again;*
- *Ask them to join supporting clubs, share the story, organize thematic parties, etc.;*
- *Invite them to subscribe to updates on the story, updates about the characters, follow-up stories, etc.*

## **Interactive videos Mission**

### **The powers gained at the end of the mission:**

- *In-depth understanding of how interactive video stories are structured and made.*
- *The use of Eko tools and branching scenario tools for publishing interactive stories.*

### **The magic of using stories in advocacy:**

- *Interactive video stories is a participatory and more empowering way to tell stories for your audience. Your audience joins in shaping the flow of the video story you create, empathize, and relate to the story better as they have power to influence the flow of the story with the characters and the challenges they have to guide in your story.*

- *The interactive stories allow you to engage your audience more efficiently and incite their emotions that can make them relate and feel ownership to the story you tell.*

### Start your mission here:

1. Open the [Eko Studio](#) and see at least two examples from the example gallery to understand interactive video storytelling.
2. Create a **creator account** or login on Eko Studio if you have already an account. Start a new project by following [this tutorial](#).
3. Think of a recent dream you had or choose another topic to tell it in your interactive video story.
4. Now, write down the regular storyline of your real dream and an alternative version of your dream story by changing contents such as a character, or development or final of the story.
5. Create videos for both versions of your stories by using simple photos or videos (You can use any video editor such as mobile video editor or movie maker).
6. Add the videos in your Eko Studio interactive video project as described in the tutorial.
7. Once you are done, share it with your friends to let them manage and give you feedback.
8. Do not forget to share your story on social media with #MILagers hashtag.

# Augmented reality mission

Exercise - develop an AR story with Aurora Virtual Reality APP

## The powers gained at the end of the mission:

- *Understanding of how a basic Augmented reality content is structured and made.*
- *The use of Arloopa app to create your first mark-based AR experience.*

## The magic of using stories in advocacy:

- *Augmented reality (AR) is another participatory medium to communicate any information or tell your story. Your audience can interact with the content you create, so it gives a more engaging experience.*
- *Stories provided by AR technology allows you to engage your audience more efficiently and invoke their emotions.*

## Start your mission here:

1. Create an **account** by clicking on [ARLOOPA Studio](#) if you have already an account.
2. Open the tutorial video "[How to create a Marker-based AR experience with the ARLOOPA studio](#)" from [this link](#) and learn .
3. Google and find an illustrator that represents Little Red Riding Hood and create a poster by using a design tool such as Microsoft Word, Canva or any other text/video editor.
4. Find on youtube a little red riding hood video.
5. Open the ARLOOPA Studio and create a Marker-based AR experience by using the poster as trigger and the youtube video as AR content by following the tutorial above.
6. When your content is approved, download the app on your phone, try and share with your friends.

## Learn more!

The Power of Immersive Storytelling: A tool for transformative learning

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/00094056.2019.1616466>

The Power of Immersive Storytelling: A tool for transformative learning

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/00094056.2019.1616466>

Immersive Storytelling: Tools and tips

<https://www.rjionline.org/stories/immersive-storytelling-tools-and-tips>

Augmented reality examples: <https://arloopa.com/>

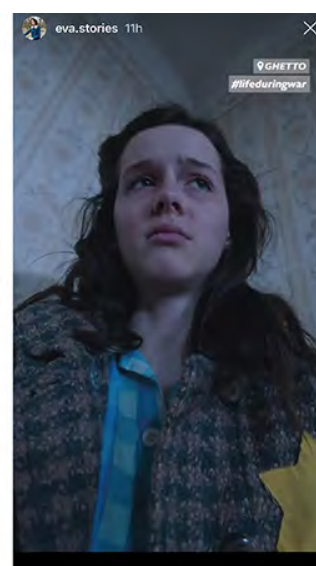
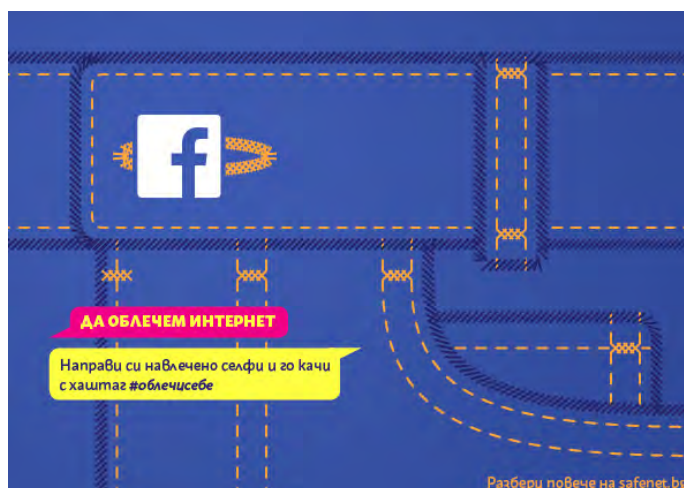
—

A person is holding a white rectangular sign in front of a blurred green background. The person's hands are visible at the edges of the sign, and they are wearing a colorful, patterned shirt with red, green, and blue designs. The sign contains the text "Examples of successful storytelling campaigns" in a bold, black, sans-serif font.

# **Examples of successful storytelling campaigns**

# What will you learn in this chapter?

At the heart of every social cause is the need to connect with people; to inspire, convince, and prompt them to take action or change behaviors. Now assuming you got all the skills we presented in the previous chapters, it is time to see inspiring examples how successful storytelling campaigns combine these skills to inspire, convince and take action. You will find good storytelling examples handpicked by MILagers parnters.



# To be a person is to be a story

Storytelling campaign recommended by Awesome People



**Tone and style:** Documentary

**Main target group:** 16+

**Theme:** To reduce discrimination and prejudices against people connected to different labels and stereotypes and increase awareness of these people's situation and broaden the perspectives of people's identity and story.

**Form of Storytelling:** Photo + Text - Social media, physical exhibition

**Country:** Sweden

**Platform:** Instagram and Facebook, state library, human library event at Örebro castle

## Background of the storytelling campaign: What is it? Who prepared it? What is the inspiration and need?

‘To be a person is to be a story’ started with five young people 16-18 years old from NGO Awesome People, Sweden went on a youth exchange to Spain within the Erasmus+ program with the title “To be a person is to be a story” where the participants learned about the topic of storytelling and prejudices and discrimination. During the week in Spain the participants got to arrange a human library event together with the other participants at the youth exchange. The Swedish team got inspired by the event and wanted to create a similar event in their hometown Örebro. To market the event the group decided to create a social media campaign inspired by “Humans of New York” which they called #100storiesorebro. With help from additional young people they asked random people in Örebro to share a personal story. They collected 100 stories together with a photograph and put them in the To be a person template and posted the stories on Instagram and Facebook two weeks before the human library event.

The aim of the social media campaign was the same as the whole project: To reduce discrimination and prejudices against people connected to different labels and stereotypes and increase awareness of these people's situation and broaden the perspectives of people's identity and story. Due to increased migration in Sweden there has been more people from different cultures and it is important to know that everyone has a story to tell. With the campaign the group wanted to show the diversity in Örebro by collecting stories from young and old, women and men, immigrants and Swedes.

When collecting people's story the young people asked questions such as “What is your happiest/saddest moment in life” “Tell me about about a person who has influenced your life” “ What are you most afraid of?” etc.

At the human library event some of the people who had shared their story came to the event and it was the most successful campaign in Awesome People counting how many views and shares online. One of the people who shared her story was even contacted by the local newspaper who did a reportage of that person's story. We also had people telling us how much they liked to read the stories.

### **Impact of the storytelling: Controversy, success and failure factors? What made it successful and what made it failure?**

The success factors of the storytelling campaign was that it was a local campaign with local people sharing their stories. They were easy to read and with the variety of 100 different people, the diversity of Örebro could really be visualized. The failure factors were that it was not so interactive campaign, the point of it was mainly to market the human library where more interaction was given but more could have been done to engage the audience in the social media campaign.

### **Doability: How technically difficult and costly to do it considering various youth organizations and NGOs capacity?**

**Difficulty level: 2/5**

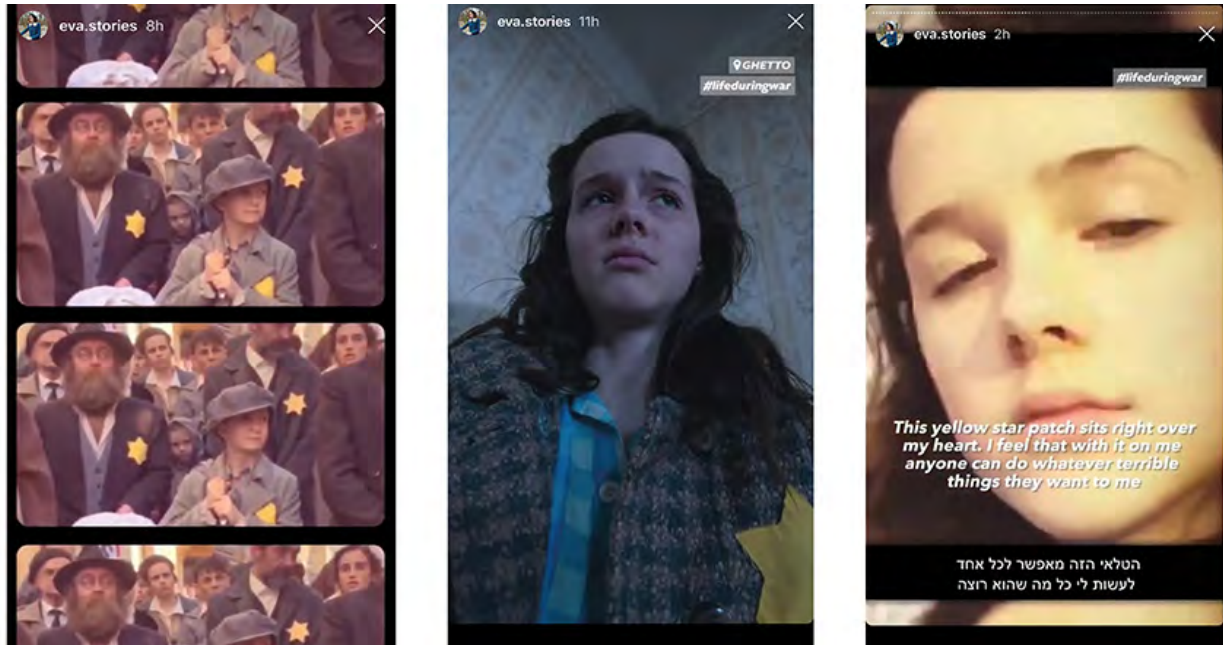
The group who collected the stories were mainly newly arrived immigrants who never had talked to a stranger before this project so it is easy to do this campaign when you only need the time to collect people's stories. The campaign itself did not cost anything. The group used Canva to put the stories in the same frame.

## Key Takeaway: Highlights and advices based on the storytelling?

*When doing a campaign with people's stories it is worth to take the time to listen to the person telling his/her story and ask different questions when needed to get a story which is either surprising, amusing, emotional or a story which many people can relate to. Why Humans of New York and this campaign works is because it is interesting to learn about other people's lives and struggles and invites us to unite in humanity with a story.*

# Eva Stories

Storytelling campaign recommended by Norsensus Mediaforum



**Tone and style:** Dramatic and fictional

**Main target group:** Under 18

**Theme:** To raise awareness about Holocaust among the young audience by using social media stories.

**Form of Storytelling:** Social media, video storytelling

**Country:** USA but the campaign was international.

**Platform:** Instagram and Facebook

## Background of the storytelling campaign: What is it? Who prepared it? What is the inspiration and need?

'Eva Stories' began with giant billboards that read: "What if a girl in the Holocaust had Instagram?" The illustration depicted a hand holding a smartphone behind barbed wire.

The campaign, which chronicles the last days of a real 13-year-old Hungarian Jew in 1944 through Instagram Stories, was the brainchild of 56-year-old tech and media billionaire Mati Kochavi and his daughter Maya, founder of popular tween platform StelloGirls.

It aims to educate a new generation about the Holocaust, following a 2018 US survey which found 66% of Millennials could not identify what Auschwitz was.

With the help of researchers, Mati and Mya sifted through diaries from the Holocaust period until they found one belonging to Eva Heyman, who chronicled her daily life before and after the 1944 German invasion of Hungary. Beginning with her 13th birthday, the diary covers events such as her parents' divorce, an unrequited crush, her aspirations to become a photojournalist, and how her life changes during the occupation. Eva's diary ends on 30 May 1944, just days before her deportation, and she died at Auschwitz on 17 October 1944.

Eva used Instagram Stories' questions feature, to ask questions such as how to cheer up her grandfather or get the boy she likes to notice her. "We got such a crazy amount of engagement from that and realised how connected people were to the story," Maya told Campaign.

The audience's feedback dictated the order in which the story played out, while social media monitoring tools were used to analyse viewers' emotions. Realising "people wanted some hope", the last episode was changed from Eva boarding a train to Auschwitz, to a scene where Eva asks her best friend Annie if people will remember them.

“Yes Eva, your journal – everyone will remember us,” Annie answers. Then, a challenge is posed to viewers: “Write a message in memory of Eva.” Within a few minutes, hundreds of thousands of messages flooded in. “We will always love you and remember you,” one user wrote.

### **Impact of the storytelling: Controversy, success and failure factors? What made it successful and what made it failure?**

Eva Stories generated a lot of controversy prior to its launch on Israel’s Holocaust Memorial Day, with critics claiming it was in bad taste. But this controversy helped the @Eva.Stories Instagram account amass more than 180,000 followers before the series debuted, and when it did, it became an international phenomenon overnight. Across 70 Instagram Stories chapters, the film received more than 300 million views in less than 48 hours – coming from across the globe, despite the campaign being focused on an Israeli audience.

### **Doability: How technically difficult and costly to do it considering various youth organizations and NGOs capacity?**

**Difficulty level: 2/5**

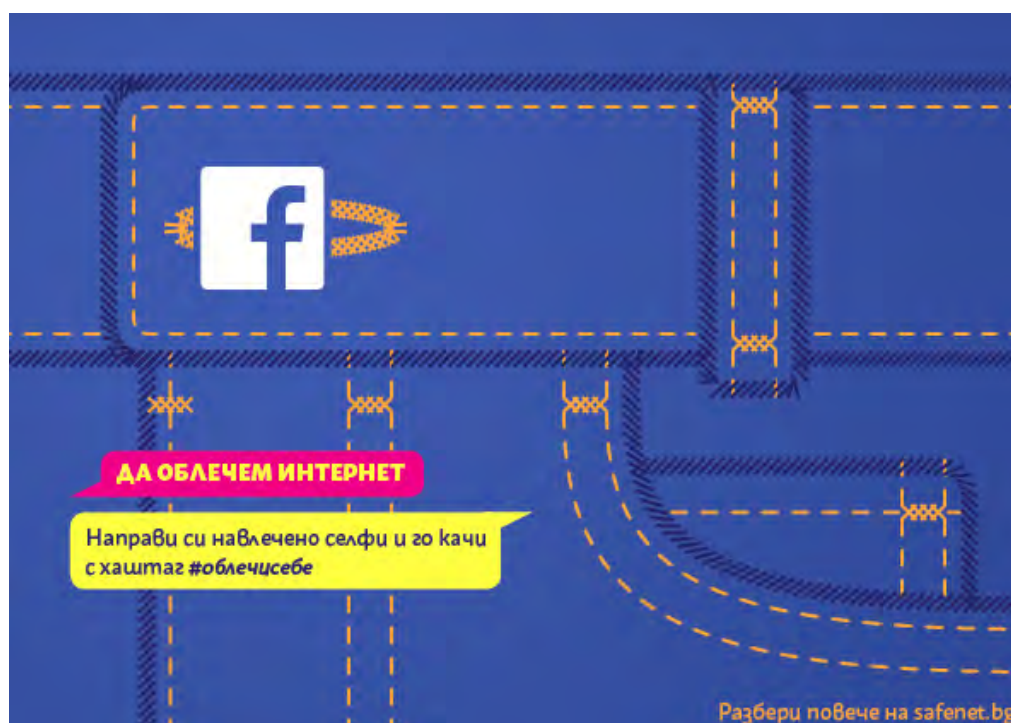
To have the same production quality can be an expensive process in which you may need different skill sets yet it is highly doable storytelling format with a well researched and simple story contents.

## Key Takeaway: Highlights and advices based on the storytelling?

*Social media platforms today provide a lot of storytelling tools to make use to reach both young and general audience. One of the best feature of this kind of social media storytelling is the participatory and interactive feature for the audience. This story example is a high end production with all filming, research and effects yet it is still doable with a good story idea and strategy without any financial resource. This type of formats are good opportunity to engage the young people you work with in the storytelling campaign. Another lesson to get from the story: Invest time in interviewing others or being interviewed by others..*

# #ОблечиСеБе или за няколко лайка повече (#DressUp or for a few likes more)

Storytelling campaign recommended by ARC Fund



**Tone and style:** Humor

**Main target group:** Primary target – young people aged 14-18; Secondary target – parents, teachers, and adults

**Theme:** It is a campaign against sexualized behavior on the Internet. It aims to fight the stereotype that people can collect likes and be popular on the Internet only if they upload provocative and revealing pictures.

**Form of Storytelling:** Social media campaign, photos, digital storytelling

**Country:** Bulgaria

**Platform:** Facebook, Instagram and Twitter

## Background of the storytelling campaign: What is it? Who prepared it? What is the inspiration and need?

“Maria opened Facebook and scrolled the latest uploaded photos. One thing could not fail to impress her. Some photos stood out among everything else – provocative ones that you upload and likes and comments start pouring in – “The best”, “You are unique”, “Hey, beauty”, stickers, kisses. “Hmm, obviously, to be cool online, you have to undress.”, thought Maria, “But why do you need such fame... or maybe why not... but what would Silviya and Petya say... well, they are real friends to me.” As she had this conversation with herself, Maria saw another half-naked provocative photo and thought: #DressUp.”

This story with a happy ending is rather a rarity among Bulgarian children in the last years. It has always been important for people to be liked and accepted by others. Nowadays, this is easier than ever, with likes, stickers and hashtags becoming the modern expressions of approval. The desire for wider “approval” pushes youngsters looking for attention to engage in dangerous practices, such as the sharing of sexual images online. Often even the young people, who do not approve of this practice, upload such provocative pictures so that they would be like their peers.

Europol's statistics on children's behavior on the Internet shows that more than 80% of the content on pedophile sites is generated by children themselves voluntarily and unconsciously. Much of the rest of the content is blackmailed precisely because of the obscene photos they posted on the Internet without realizing the potential long-term harm.

A study of the Bulgarian Safer Internet Center back in 2015 showed that a quarter of all teenagers admit to taking a nude or half-naked photo. And this provocation has become public on the Internet. Parents and children should make stand against child

blackmail together. This was the main message of the #ОблечиСеБе (#DressUp) campaign that was organized to raise awareness that hasty behavior online can lead to serious consequences, especially to the psyche of adolescents.

#ОблечиСеБе (#DressUp) is an online campaign launched in 2015 by the Bulgarian Safer Internet Center in partnership with teenagers from 6 schools in Sofia, Bulgaria. It aimed to fight the stereotype that people can collect likes and be popular on the Internet only if they upload provocative and revealing pictures. Here is the video that has been created for the campaign –

[Youtube Link](#)

The hashtag #ОблечиСеБе (#DressUp) was a way to prove that one can be cool, funny and accepted without getting undressed. Anyone who wanted to join the campaign, should have dressed up with many layers of clothing, take a selfie and publish it on Facebook, Instagram or Twitter with the hashtag. The campaign was implemented with the financial support of the Norway Grants Programme 2009-2014.

Humor – as the goal of the campaign is related to a sensitive topic (prevention of child sexual self-exploitation online) the Bulgarian Safer Internet Centre team and the young people involved in the campaign's design decided that the didactic style of communication and especially blaming should be avoided. Instead, a humorous approach was chosen – friendly irony which can deliver the message in a positive tone. Thus, the problem was pointed but without judgement. For instance, in the campaign video spot, a young adult actress playing a teenaged girl dresses on slow motion, instead of striping (on a music resembling a typical strip tease melody). Also, the campaign stickers contained famous quotes from the pop-culture, as “The winter is coming” and “May the clothes be with you”.

## **Impact of the storytelling: Controversy, success and failure factors? What made it successful and what made it failure?**

The #DressUp campaign has been a success with more than 14 000 people who have viewed the campaign's video and a lot of "dressed up" selfies posted on Facebook and Instagram. The campaign has been launched in 2016 and has been revived many times by 2018.

The story about Maria contributed to the success of the campaign by making many people recognize themselves with her character and the situation that has been presented. The campaign's video also contributed to the success of the campaign showing that people can get likes when dressed up.

## **Doability: How technically difficult and costly to do it considering various youth organizations and NGOs capacity?**

### **Difficulty level: 5/5**

- Sensitive topic
- The Bulgarian SIC needed to involve young people in campaign designing.
- Limited budget
- Other professionals should be hired (actress, director, printing company)
- No previous campaigns with the same theme in Bulgaria (no best practices to be analyzed)..

## Key Takeaway: Highlights and advices based on the storytelling?

*Presenting the importance of the issue of sexualized behavior on the Internet through a short story and video has been influential for the target audience of the campaign.*

*When you deal with a sensitive topic like the sexualized behavior of teenagers and their potential sexual self-exploitation you should find the most appropriate tone and approach. One of the options is to tell them a frightening story – to show them how such behavior puts them at risk. It could also work but in that case, you base your approach to a negative feeling (fear). Also, you contradict their fears to a behavior which they found cool, instead of addressing their need to behave in such way which can work better. So, to be effective, you should research the motivation for the behavior you are trying to change in a positive way and the best way is to involve representatives of the target group (young people in this case) in the process. And when you identify the motivation (in this case – to be “cool”, to be accepted by their peers), you can suggest alternative behavior (“you can be cool and fun doing just the opposite”). That is why the campaign used humor – to make the wished behavior look cool and fun to the target group and give them sense of belonging to a virtual community of “cool” young people using the campaign hashtag.*

## „I want to marry” poem

Storytelling campaign recommended by Fundatia Danis



[LINK TO THE CAMPAIGN](#)

**Tone and style:** Emotional and funny.

**Main target group:** General audience

**Theme:** This is a very powerful, emotional, and empowering poem talking about the drama of many girls in this world, forced to marry while they are still children or very young, giving a different, surprising perspective for such a campaign. Shemema, ten years old, from Ghana, talks in her poem about her dream of getting married, but also about

**Form of Storytelling:** It is a video story shared on social media channels of World Vision International and the organization's website. It takes the form of personal storytelling, using the sparklines technique, talking about one girl's dreams through the help of a poem

all the other dreams she wants to accomplish before her wedding. She starts her poem like this: „I want to marry... but I did not say I am in a hurry”..

**Country:** International

**Platform:** Facebook, Youtube, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn, and World Vision International’s website

### Background of the storytelling campaign: What is it? Who prepared it? What is the inspiration and need?

As the campaign is quite recent, considering the moment we prepare this case study for you, there is not much background information about it or more follow-up data about this campaign. However, from WVI’s website, we learn that Shemema is part of the group of children World Vision supports in Ghana. The poem was initially written and published to mark the African Union Day of the African Child (DAC 2021) on 16 June. Shemema recites the poem to address, in front of the African Union and other governments in this world, “the devastating impact of child marriage on young girls’ childhoods” (WVI, 2021). Thus, through this 10-year old girl, World Vision calls on governments to ban child marriage or implement existing laws that ban child marriage while preventing and responding to child marriage situations in their countries.

In the video, Shemema emphasizes with a powerful poem some of the dreams and wishes, a child, a young girl like her, will be forced to give up when married at such an early age:

- Wearing a school uniform before a wedding dress;
- Living her childhood before stepping into adulthood life;

- Dressing up a matriculation gown instead of being the youngest bride in town;
- Wearing her graduation gown before the wedding crown;
- Being on a career path before the first son is born.

Finally, Shemema says she wants to marry, but she is not in a hurry, and she wants to live this dream too as an adult educated person who has already started her professional career.

Regarding the cause that Shemema's poem advocates for, according to World Vision (2021), over 100 million more girls will be married in the next ten years if governments do not take action in ending child marriage and stop this human rights abuse. The number is likely much higher due to the COVID-19 pandemic and its secondary negative effects. Moreover, at the global level, one in five young women (20-24 years old) were married as children. Child marriage occurs because of poverty, inadequate implementation of laws, harmful social practices, and gender inequality - as the key root to these causes. World Vision's campaign aims to bring justice, enforce the existing laws of banning child marriage, or develop such laws to protect and give children, especially girls, access to quality education and the power to determine the outcomes of their lives.

### **Impact of the storytelling: Controversy, success and failure factors? What made it successful and what made it failure?**

The video story was launched two weeks before we developed this case study. In these two weeks, World Vision raised more than 53% of the signatures that the organization targeted for the petition. Also, on social media, the poem had the following impact:

- Facebook: over 102K likes, 16K shares, and 4.5K comments;

- LinkedIn: over 14.8K views, 920 likes, 81 comments;
- Instagram IGTV: over 3.7K views and 50 comments;
- Twitter: 1.5K views, 46 retweets;
- Youtube: 484 views.

The success of getting more than half of the targeted results in two weeks is due, most probably, to Shemema's powerful message and charisma, the topic of the story, and the campaign's topic - ending child marriage. Moreover, World Vision International has already had an established audience on all the social media channels with hundreds of thousands of followers, especially on Facebook and LinkedIn.

### **Doability: How technically difficult and costly to do it considering various youth organizations and NGOs capacity?**

**Difficulty level: 2/5**

We have chosen to showcase this video story for you, active young people starting your advocacy and storytelling journey, to show you how easy it is to create a story with the right character and a powerful message.

To record a video like the one of Shemema, you only need a smartphone with a good camera and a tripod to stabilize the camera. Your focus in such a storytelling campaign should be on the people you choose to feature and the message they send out. Choose a person who could rightfully talk in the name of those you are advocating for, find a charismatic person, a powerful story, or help the hero of your

story convey their honest and authentic story in a powerful message to the audience. World Vision had a brilliant idea to ask girls like Shemema to write poems about the issue that might ruin their future - a too-early marriage.

### **Key Takeaway: Highlights and advices based on the storytelling?**

*In your campaigns, focus more on the story's hero and their challenge, the goal you want to reach, the message you want to send to your audience, and only afterward think to the medium and the technology you need for putting out this message.*

*Shemema's video story also teaches us that, before using advanced tech to impress our audience, it's better to try to be creative on the following two fronts:*

- 1. Surprise the audience with the perspective you take in your story. Shemema could have complained about all the terrible things girls her age experience in Ghana when forced to marry and sent away by their families. However, she chooses to talk about her dreams and all the things she wants before getting married. Basically, she explains to the audience what will be taken away from her if she marries at such a young age.*

- 2. Surprise the audience with the format of the message. It could be a poem, like this one, a song, a drawing, an animation, etc. Build on the abilities your heroes have, explore those abilities or build something together. In Shemema's case, the poem also shows her writing talents that will be completely wasted if she will be forced into a marriage as a child, withdrawn from school, and enslaved, as a child, in taking care of her husband and future children.*

*Finally, when you use mainly social media to promote your advocacy video story, keep it short. Shemema's poem is about 1:20 minutes long. A strong and concise message delivered by a charismatic hero - that's all you need some time to get your message out in a powerful and meaningful way!..*

## #ГероятСиТи (#YouAreTheHero)

Storytelling campaign recommended by ARC Fund



**Tone and style:** Drama with happy ending

**Main target group:** 14 – 17 years old

**Theme:** To raise awareness about online bullying, hate speech online.

**Form of Storytelling:** Short reportages, stories, diary entries (blog-type personal storytelling)

**Country:** Bulgaria

**Platform:** YouTube, Facebook, Instagram

## Background of the storytelling campaign: What is it? Who prepared it? What is the inspiration and need?

The [#YouAreTheHero](#) (#ГероятСиТи) online campaign was implemented by the Bulgarian [Safer Internet Center](#) (coordinated by ARC Fund and the [Parents Association](#)) within the project “Digital skills of children in the 21<sup>st</sup> century”, funded under the Europe Programme of the Sofia Municipality. The campaign was co-created with 12 young people aged 15-17 (from different gender, ethnic and cultural backgrounds), members of the [Youth panel](#) of the [Bulgarian Safer Internet Centre](#). The Youth panel is a voluntary structure of young people aged 14-18, which exists as a successful form of youth participation since 2010. The young volunteers helped the Safer Internet Center’s experts to define teenagers’ needs and the alternative behaviour which addresses their needs. They also used their creativity to design and write a script for the campaign video and developed it in cooperation with [TeenStation](#).

The main message for the **#YouAreTheHero** campaign is incorporated in [a video](#) that shows a boy writing hateful comments on social media, but suddenly realises that he is a hero in his little sister’s eyes, which makes him change his behaviour. The goal of the video clip is to show a touching emotion. The main purpose is to show how boy’s behaviour reflects his relatives (his younger sister). His focus on online hate speech is in a conflict with his relationship with his sister and he makes her suffer ignoring her. Using the effect of the contrast the desirable alternative behaviour of teenage “haters” is shown – to respect more themselves realizing that there are some people who love them and see them in a positive way. The younger sister (representing the important people in “hater’s” life) delivers the message that he needs to be a positive example for someone.

The video challenges young people aged 14 – 18 years to post on Facebook or Instagram an example of a good/noble deed/act they have done during the summer holidays as a counterpoint to online bullying and hate speech which are the most common risk on the Internet for children. The information could be in any format or combination of formats – video, photo or picture, with short text. The campaign was active from 15 August to 15 September 2019 under the motto “*I do not know what you did this summer. Tell me! #YouAreTheHero*”. Participants could also share a picture of them wearing their “hero sweatshirt” with the hashtag **#ГероятСиТи (#YouAreTheHero)**. With this symbolic action they could show their support to the campaign's cause for positive online behaviour and safe use of the Internet. All participants in the campaign participated in a raffle and had the chance to win individual or group prizes.

Among the main goals of the **#ГероятСиТи (#YouAreTheHero)** campaign were the following:

- *Engaging the target groups with the idea of sharing good news and behavioral examples from our daily lives on social networks;*
- *Building a positive attitude towards doing good in general;*
- *Behavior change - building habits in doing and sharing good deeds;*
- *Attracting public attention to the need to share positive examples and news on social networks;*

### **Impact of the storytelling: Controversy, success and failure factors? What made it successful and what made it failure?**

In order to help young people to work structurally, Bulgarian SIC experts provided them training (from October 2016 to June 2017) on ABCDE marketing model which is used by one of the most successful companies in the world. The training was provided

through attractive interactive methodology emphasizing teamwork which encouraged the members of Youth panel to make analysis on each step of marketing strategy before producing the final script of the campaign video. They were facilitated by SIC trainers to define the target group of the campaign and its needs and interests, to define the typical behavior of average representative of the target group, the specific negative online behaviour which should be addressed and the motives of this conduct and to find alternative positive behavior which can address the same needs and motivation and could be promoted through the online campaign.

The success of the storytelling campaign was due to the direct involvement of young people (the Youth panel) in developing the storyboard for the campaign videospot, making the video and the casting of the young actors. Furthermore, the video was directed by a professional director who is also a mentor of the young people within a common project on youth media content creation by the Bulgarian SIC and "The Voice of Children" Foundation.

### **Doability: How technically difficult and costly to do it considering various youth organizations and NGOs capacity?**

**Difficulty level: 5/5 –**

- *Need to involve young people, to teach them basic principles of marketing and campaign making, provide focus groups with them as target group's representatives consult with them and facilitate their analysis and creative work*
- *-Need to work with a professional director for the campaign video and to provide a proper equipment for shooting the spot.*
- *-Need to cast teenager boy and little girl for the roles in the video spot.*
- *-Parental consent needed for the young people involved in campaign creation and for the young people who played their roles in the video spot.*

- -Need to provide prizes for the competition for good actions of young people.
- -Limited budget.

### **Key Takeaway: Highlights and advices based on the storytelling?**

*Using the storytelling approach for the #ГероятСиТи (#YouAreTheHero) campaign helped to deeply influence young people and motivate them to participate in the campaign. Sharing the stories on the social media contributed to reaching more young people as well as the general audience. The direct participation of the Youth panel in the development of the video helped making a story that is close to the young people, presenting real behaviors they face in their everyday life.*

*When you want to tell a story to deliver a positive message within a campaign it is important to analyze the motivation of the representatives of your target group to behave in unacceptable way (in that case – to write hateful comments online or do a Cyber bullying) and to suggest them an alternative positive behavior which addresses the same needs. The best way to identify the motivation for the negative behavior is to involve young people in the process. In that case, the Bulgarian SIC's team and young people found that the online "haters" and bullies need to have a respect in their peer group and need to belong to a community of strong and "cool" peers. Also, they do not hate everybody but have friends and relatives who respect and love (represented by the character of the little sister in the campaign video slot). So, the alternative behavior inspired by the campaign contents addresses the same needs – the need to be respected with "You are the hero" ("you can be a role model for someone") message, the need of belonging to strong and "cool" peer group with joining a virtual community of "cool" and strong young "superheroes".*

# Diary of a Pakistani schoolgirl

Storytelling campaign recommended by Fundatia Danis

## Moving moments from Malala's BBC diary

🕒 10 October 2014



Pakistani child education activist Malala Yousafzai has jointly won the Nobel Peace Prize, becoming its youngest ever recipient.

**Tone and style:** Realistic and Dramatic

**Main target group:** BBC Urdu and BBC International's readers

**Theme:** To raise awareness about girls' education and address to the challenges in this area.

**Form of Storytelling:** Social media campaign, picture/photo/video with short text, digital storytelling

**Country:** Pakistan initially and international

**Platform:** BBC and Social media

### Background of the storytelling campaign: What is it? Who prepared it? What is the inspiration and need?

'In 2008, the Taliban ruling over the Swat district of Pakistan ordered to close down many schools and ban girls' education. Malala was supported and encouraged by her father, a teacher himself who ran a girls' school in their village, to start writing a diary/blog about what it means for her and her classmates to live under the Taliban regime (Malala Fund; [BBC](#), 2012). In 2009 her diary was published in BBC Urdu under the pseudonym of Gul Makai. When she started writing her blog entries for BBC Urdu, Malala was already speaking English ([BBC](#), 2012). You may read and get inspired by some of Malala's blog entries in this article published by BBC in 2014: *Moving moments from Malala's BBC diary*, available at <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-29565738>, or you may check all the entries she published in BBC Urdu here: [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south\\_asia/7861053.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/7861053.stm) (there are three parts of her diary, see the links at the end of the article).

Malala wrote in her blog entries about her love of learning and reading and took the audience inside her life under the Taliban's regime.

5 January 2009

"I was getting ready for school and about to wear my uniform when I remembered that our principal had told us not to wear uniforms - and come to school wearing normal clothes instead. So I decided to wear my favourite pink dress. Other girls in school were also wearing colourful dresses and the school presented a homely look. My friend came to me and said, 'for God's sake, answer me honestly, is our school

going to be attacked by the Taleban?' During the morning assembly we were told not to wear colourful clothes as the Taleban would object to it." ([BBC](#), 2009)

15 January 2009

"The night was filled with the noise of artillery fire and I woke up three times. But since there was no school I got up later at 10 am. Afterwards, my friend came over and we discussed our homework. Today is 15 January, the last day before the Taleban's edict comes into effect, and my friend was discussing homework as if nothing out of the ordinary had happened." ([BBC](#), 2009)

In 2009, when the war between the Taliban and the Pakistan Army intensified, Malala and her family moved out of the area, and they were able to return their home only later that year. Meanwhile, she gave up her anonymity and appeared on television and in public events advocating for girls' education. Even New York Times made [a documentary](#) about her in 2009 ([BBC](#), 2012).

As her voice became stronger and more visible, Malala became a Taliban target. In October 2012, on her way from the school that she had managed to return to, a masked gunman boarded her bus and asked - "Who is Malala?", and then he shot her on the left side of her head ([Malala Fund](#)). Ten days later, she woke up in a hospital in Birmingham, England, with people worldwide praying for her recovery ([Malala Fund](#)). She was the symbol of resistance to the Taliban ([BBC](#), 2012).

**Impact of the storytelling: Controversy, success and failure factors? What made it successful and what made it failure?**

Malala's writing definitely had an impact. We could not find numbers of how many people read her diary/blog. However, her writing and speaking out contributed to pushing Pakistan's government to take action against the Taliban and reopening schools for girls. At the same time, her activism continued even after she returned to school. She kept talking against extremism and terrorism and advocating for girls' education:

"In 2011 she was nominated for the International Children's Peace Prize by The KidsRights Foundation. Later last year the government awarded her the National Peace Award - subsequently renamed the National Malala Peace Prize - for those under 18 years old. (...) For many Pakistanis, Malala has become a symbol of resistance to the Taliban." ([BBC](#), 2012)

After her miraculous survival and months of surgeries and rehabilitation, Malala decided not to live a quiet life in her new home in the U.K. but continue her activism until every girl could go to school. She established Malala Fund, a non-profit organization dedicated to supporting girls' education. In recognition of her work and dedication, Malala received the Nobel Peace Prize in December 2014 ([Malala Fund](#)).

Currently, Malala's Fund also runs an online publication and newsletter - [Assembly](#). Malala's goal with this media outlet is to help other girls and young women around the world tell their stories, share their thoughts, challenges, and accomplishments. At the same time, the readers can learn about this new generation of female leaders ([Assembly](#)). So if you are a young woman leader or activist or a girl or young woman willing to express yourself and your thoughts, send your story to Assembly:

<https://assembly.malala.org/submit>.

## Doability: How technically difficult and costly to do it considering various youth organizations and NGOs capacity?

### Difficulty level: 2/5

We chose to share Malala Yousafzai's story of activism with you because we thought it is relevant for a young person starting their activism journey to see how she actually started. She did not set up the Malala Fund and got the Nobel Peace Prize, but she started as a blogger when she was only 11 years old, writing and sharing her thoughts about daily life under the Taliban regime.

We consider this an easy way of sharing your ideas, expressing your opinions with others by setting up a blog, and write the messages you want to send out. Of course, first, you need to know your cause and see what you could share from your own personal experience about that topic and what you want your message to do: educate, motivate or move into action. Second, you need to decide on the platform where to publish your stories. Will you set up your personal blog? Or would you choose already recognized platforms, such as Assembly set up by Malala's Fund, Voices of Youth managed by UNICEF, or other international, national, or local platforms that you would consider relevant for your writing pieces?.

## Key Takeaway: Highlights and advices based on the storytelling?

*Even Nobel Peace Prize laureates start from small projects in their advocacy work. Do you have a cause you strongly believe in? Do you have a fight you want to take against a specific injustice? Start writing about it! Blog about how this injustice affects your life or others' life. Document your personal stories or collect others' stories impacted by the*

*abuses done by authorities or other repression groups. Here are the steps and tips to follow, as we learned them from Malala's story:*

- *Find a cause you believe in or worth fighting for;*
- *Understand your audience and decide on what you want them to do: get educated about the cause, get motivated, or get into action for the cause;*
- *Identity a perspective you want to take - a personal story or others' stories, reporting facts/news, writing opinion pieces, etc.;*
- *Find or develop a platform you want to use to share your messages and run your campaign;*
  - *Start writing and keep writing;*
- *Be patient. Your audience is getting around. Do not abandon your project after your first 2-3 articles. Be persistent!*
  - *Seek the support of others in running and promoting your blog;*
- *Once the blog has some history and good content, start creating other methods of meeting and engaging your audience for the cause you advocate for.*

*Start writing, and good luck!..*

BBC, 2014, Moving moments from Malala's BBC diary,

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-29565738>

BBC, 2012, Malala Yousafzai: Portrait of the girl blogger,

<https://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-19899540>

BBC, 2009, Diary of a Pakistani schoolgirl,

[http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south\\_asia/7834402.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/7834402.stm)



[www.milagers.org](http://www.milagers.org)