Lori L. Jacobwith

- Master storyteller, trainer & coach
- 25+ years in social profit sector
- Measurable: Since 2001 I’ve helped organizations raise **$200 million from individual donors.** And counting.
- Coached more than 3000 organizations and as many stories.

**TOP SECRET**

There is a secret to cutting through the clutter of day to day noise…
What We Will Cover

- What is “Development”
- What do donors want?
- What is a “mission moment”
- Where to find great stories
- Tools to help

Tools You Can Use
Biggest Communication Challenges?

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

~ Source: AFP Fundraising Dictionary, (Association of Fundraising Professionals)
Conveying Your Impact

Real people examples

Your Impact
My Impact

This Cookie helps fund a camp for city kids.

This Cookie cheers up soldiers overseas.

This Cookie teaches girls how to manage money.

Every Cookie Has a Mission:
TO HELP GIRLS DO GREAT THINGS
Find your cookies at GirlsWhoCookies.org

What do you want supporters to do?

Do something BIG
The secret to nonprofit success: Clear, Bold Communication

- **Telling Your Story** - *Intro*
- **Asking** - *Take Action*
- **Maximize Relationships** - *Stay Relevant*
- **Managing Data** - *Success Measures*
What is Storytelling

A narrative account of real or imagined events.

What Storytelling is Not

You are not a newspaper or news reporter that shares objective and careful stories.
What Storytelling is Not

It’s not about how well YOU “tell” the story.

It’s about how much passion you convey and the picture you paint with your words.

Storytelling

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

~ Source: National Storytelling Association
Why are stories so important*?

- We “THINK” in story
- Every decision we make is based on the story we tell ourselves.
- If we don’t feel something we can’t make a decision

*From Lisa Cron: Wired for Story

Why are stories so important*?

- **Facts**: Wake up the brain.
- **Stories**: Allow us to experience the facts.

*From Lisa Cron: Wired for Story
50% of telling a great story

...is finding a great story to tell

Finding A Great Story

Source: Jesse F. Hallett eNews July 2012
Stories of your impact

...create unforgettable emotional connections

Do people take action when you share your stories?
Mission moments

**Lori’s Definition:**

“Any short, inspirational, example of how your organization is making an impact.”

- Must be an example of a real person.
- Could be a client, staff person, volunteer and certainly can be a board member.

Where to find stories?

We take for granted:

1. People understand what kind of impact examples you are looking for.
2. People know how to tell a story.

Utilitarian Communication
Inspiring Communication

Your gift makes something special happen...

Boring & Brilliant Stories

Sample story Boring

We are grateful to Mrs. Lee for being a subscriber to our theater for many years. Mrs. Lee burns the hours waiting, and secretly Sensors a show. She brings gifts with her and makes sure an audience. She marvels at the quality performances we've watched at our patients were as passionate as Mrs. Lee.

Sample story Brilliant

If the story of Mrs. Lee's gift is a story we've told twice, it's because it's a brilliant story. We've learned a lot from Mrs. Lee's story, and we've tried to pass it on to others. We've seen how stories can inspire others to take action, and we're excited to share this story with you.
Where to find stories?

**Remember:**
Most people don’t know HOW to do what you are asking.

Finding Powerful Stories

**Important factors:**
1. Who do you ask for mission moment examples?
2. What questions do you ask?
3. Where do you ask the questions?
What Questions To Ask?

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

Who to ask?
Who to Ask?

Let’s make a list…

- People you serve & their family
- Board & former board members
- Donors. First-time, long-time…
- Other staff
- Event sponsors, foundations…
What Questions To Ask?

- Who did you turn away?
- Who stands out for you…?
- Favorite or best thing about this family…
- Add your own…

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHO YOU SERVE</th>
<th>SOME OPEN ENDED QUESTIONS TO START WITH, add your own</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| People you serve | • Who are you turned away by?  
| | • What was your life like before you came here?  
| | • What is the story behind it? |
| Family members of people you serve | • What are the differences you’ve seen in your client’s life since they came in? |
| Board members & home owners | • Why did you join our board?  
| | • What is an important part of our work for you?  
| | • What is an important part of our team for you? |
| Long-time donors | • Why do you commit to us?  
| | • What is it about our work that keeps you committed?  
| | • What is special about our work?  
| | • What is special about our work? |
| Prospective donors | • What brought you to this fact?  
| | • What is special about our work? |
| Other staff | • Do you have a special “moment” you remember about someone you felt was helped by your organization? |
| Foundations | • Why did you fund our program?  
| | • What is a different special about our work that connects our foundation to other granters? |
| Event sponsors | • What do you know about our work?  
| | • Why do you make a financial gift to us?  
| | • Do you have a special “moment” you remember about someone who was helped by our organization? |
| Volunteers | • What do you know about our work?  
| | • Do you have a special “moment” you remember about someone you met who was helped by our organization? |
| Other volunteers | • What do you know about our work?  
| | • Do you have a special “moment” you remember about someone you met who was helped by our organization? |

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Where to Ask the Questions?

Storytelling Criteria

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

1. Identify one person.

2. Learn & jot down as much about them as you can.

3. Write down all of the exact results.
4. Make a list of transformations due to your involvement and their results.

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

Telling a Story

- Ditch the notes/text
- Use pauses and voice inflection.
- Practice. Practice. Practice.
- Paint a picture with your words.
Remember:
Use this Storytelling Criteria

- Tell a story about **an actual person** using name/age/descriptors so your listener can visualize.

- Use **words that emotionally connect** the listener to your work and the person you’re speaking about. No jargon.

- **Shares specific examples of YOUR work** and how it makes a difference in the life of a real person.

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Share a Story

**In teams of two:**

- Tell your story.

- Receive coaching & feedback.
Examples

“When they learn to read their first word, it’s amazing to see how the whole world opens for them.”

Traditionally, we associate digitization with visions of a distant future. But digital tools offer immediate, immediate benefits - children are able to read, write, and communicate in ways that were previously unimaginable. When children are empowered with the ability to create and share their own stories, they are not only more confident in their own abilities, but they are also more likely to succeed in school and become active citizens.

Examples

“I am going to write down this day and this hour and the moment when my life changed. Now I can have hope.”

Tanzanian student upon being accepted at Peace House Secondary School.

Educating AIDS Orphans. Creating Brighter Futures.

www.peacehouseafrica.org
Examples

“Tiffany, 2007 Jeremiah Program graduate, pictured with daughter Natalie, 17, and son Nathaniel, 11

“My life was full of stumbling blocks. But Jeremiah Program gave me stability, then erated a hunger in me for education and success...The program did exactly what it said it would do. It filled me with hope, and it transformed two generations—one and my children—at the same time.”

Written

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

1. Enlist your team

2. Keep stories focused & relevant

8 Tips for Writing Effective Stories

1. Enlist your team
2. Keep stories focused & relevant
3. Keep stories light
4. Bring characters to life
8 Tips for Writing Effective Stories

5. Don’t forget quotes

6. Deliver multiple perspectives
8 Tips for Writing Effective Stories

5. Don’t forget quotes

6. Deliver multiple perspectives

7. Tell your story over time

8. A picture’s worth...

Real Stories

http://www.charitywater.org/projects/stories/rwanda-ive-heard-that-before
Real Stories

There's a reason these people have been disappointed before. The need is there, but it's not always in a form that people see, or feel comfortable sharing. Stories are a way to bring an idea to life, to make it real, tangible, and understandable.

Before the government has made them vomit or a key player, local officials, community, and When the Penguins are collapsed and exploited Manhattan, community development, charity, not even a hint of a leadership campaign experience are going to provide the building stems to open doors. Economy - climate, for everyone, those who are not insulated, Not bullets, have fun.

I have to still meeting for interviews. I'm still meeting since And I'm going to keep your promise.

Steps to Creating a Storytelling Culture

1. Infuse your mission into all meetings, discussions, events by sharing a story.

2. Ask board members, staff, donors & others for examples of people that have inspired them from your organization.

3. Insert “mission moment” shares at staff, board & committee meetings.

4. Reward the behavior you are seeking.
Steps to Creating a Storytelling Culture

5. Make it fun, safe & easy to “learn” HOW to share a powerful client example.

6. Track who shares stories using a storytelling dashboard.

7. Connect people affected by your work directly to your board, non-program staff and donors.

8. Include lots of written & told stories via social media, website, donors visits…

Storytelling & Board Members

[This link is case sensitive]
People will forget what you said. People will forget what you did. But people will never forget how you made them feel.

~ Maya Angelou

Weekly BLOG: WITHISM’S FROM LORI: Boldness, clarity and wisdom for fundraising professionals making a difference

Available at: Amazon.com

Download on Free Resources page: Lorijacobwith.com
More Help With Your Storytelling

Share:
One thing you learned.
One thing you will change to create a Storytelling culture.

Moving Forward

http://www.lorijacobwith.com/storytellingsystem
Boring to Brilliant: Finding & Sharing Powerful Stories

Thank you!