

# CRAFTING YOUR STORY

## Check for Jargon

Will your audience understand every word? Ask someone outside your field to listen. If you must use technical terms, define them clearly – or better yet, use a metaphor or analogy to make your idea stick.



## Try Social Math

Make numbers more comprehensible and compelling by simplifying them or comparing them to things your audience will readily understand.



## Transport Us to a Moment

Help us see a vivid, important moment. What did it feel like to be there? Use sensory details – what you saw, heard, touched, or felt – to bring your audience into the scene.



## Make it Relevant

Make it clear to your audience why what you're telling them is worth their attention, energy, and – hopefully – action.



## Show, Don't Tell

Use sensory details to make your story more engaging and memorable – this helps your audience actively experience the story instead of just listening to it.



## Start Strong, End Strong

Grab attention early with a surprise, a question, or something the audience cares about. And leave them with something to carry – a feeling, a question, a call to action, or a memorable image.



# CRAFTING YOUR STORY

## STORY STRUCTURES

Don't know where to start? Try this.

### TEMPLATE 1

#### 1. Drop us into a moment.

Describe a specific scene. Use sensory details to make it immediate and engaging.

"I was standing in \_\_\_\_\_, holding \_\_\_\_\_, when I realized \_\_\_\_\_."

#### 2. Zoom out – who are you?

Introduce yourself and your work. Help us understand your connection to the scene and why you are here today.

"I'm \_\_\_\_\_, and I work as a \_\_\_\_\_. That moment mattered to me because \_\_\_\_\_. I'm here today to ask you to get involved by \_\_\_\_\_."

#### 3. Why does your work matter?

Give us just enough context to understand the impact or relevance of what you do.

"The work I do affects \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_. What people often don't realize is \_\_\_\_\_."

#### 4. One more beat (optional)

Add a second moment, detail, or example that deepens the story or shifts our perspective.

"Another time, \_\_\_\_\_, which reminded me \_\_\_\_\_."

#### 5. Bring it home.

Circle back to your opening. Leave us with a clear takeaway or insight, and invite your audience to join you.

"I still think about that moment in \_\_\_\_\_, because it showed me \_\_\_\_\_. And that's why I keep doing this work. I hope you will join me."



# CRAFTING YOUR STORY

## TEMPLATE 2

### 1. Start with a problem, question, or tension.

Hook us with something real – something you wrestle with or your work addresses.

"I've always wondered why \_\_\_\_."

"The problem is, most people think \_\_\_\_, but in reality \_\_\_\_."

"Here's what keeps me up at night: \_\_\_\_."

### 2. Share your turning point or discovery.

What shifted your thinking? A moment, experience, or realization that changed how you saw things.

"That started to change when I \_\_\_\_."

"Then I saw \_\_\_\_, and it made me rethink everything."

"The breakthrough came when I realized \_\_\_\_."

### 3. What do you do now – and why does it matter?

Connect your personal journey to the work you do today.

"Now I work on \_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_."

"This led me to \_\_\_\_, where I help \_\_\_\_."

"I'm part of a team that's trying to solve this by \_\_\_\_."

### 4. Bring it to the audience.

Why should they care and how can they help? Help them see what's at stake or what's possible, and what they can do about it.

"This matters because \_\_\_\_."

"You might not work on this directly, but it connects to all of us through \_\_\_\_."

"If we get this right, we could \_\_\_\_."

"What I need from you now is \_\_\_\_."

### 5. End with clarity or hope, and a call to action.

Leave us with a reflection, a challenge, or a glimpse of possibility.

"I don't have all the answers, but I've seen what's possible when \_\_\_\_."

"The story isn't over – but we're getting closer. Here's how you can help: \_\_\_\_."

"This work has taught me that \_\_\_\_, and that gives me hope."

