



The **NON PROFIT**  
**ACADEMY**®

*Learn to reach your fundraising goals faster!*

**PRESENTS**

**Where's the Story? Discovering Stories that  
Drive Donations**

*with Dennis Fischman*

#npapresents

# Where's the Story? Discovering Stories that Drive Donations



Dennis Fischman  
*Communicate!* Consulting

# What we'll be talking about

- What storytelling can do for you
- What makes a story more than one darn thing after another
- The types of stories your nonprofit should learn to tell
- How to make sure you recognize, collect, and use stories in your donor communications
- Why you should make the donor the hero of the story

The problem: too much information!



# Instead, be a welcome guest



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**Once upon a time...**

People welcome the chance to hear a story.  
(Goldilocks should have told one to the bears!)

# What's a real story?

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-The Goodman Center

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- And because of this... (There could be several barriers)
- Until finally...(This ends the story with the Resolution)

# What kinds of stories can you tell?



1. The creation story
2. The nature of our challenge story
3. The values story
4. The striving to improve story
5. The where we are going story
6. The emblematic success story

# The stories donors want

“What did you do with the money I gave you and how did it make a difference?” (Tom Ahern)

- NOT ~~the conference you attended~~
- NOT ~~the award you won~~
- NOT ~~the grant you received~~
- NOT ~~the statistics~~

***One person (or family), facing a challenge, and overcoming it—  
“because of you.”***

# Finding Stories that Drive Donations

- Stories about whom?
- Your storytelling sources
- Recognizing a story when you hear it

# Turning “Just the Facts” into Stories

- Program: Food Stamp applications at our office
- Event: new Census data
- Story: Amadou and his family

*Look for the person who puts a face on the facts.  
Listen for the challenge, the barriers, and the resolution.*



# Ask these questions to find stories

➤ NOT “So, tell me your story!”

Do ask:

- **Question #1** Tell me about what problem this program/service solves.
- **Question #2** Can you tell me about a specific person who has used this program?
- **Question #3** What was their life like before they began working with you?
- **Question #4** Do you remember the first time you met them? What was their emotional state like?
- **Question #5** Now that they’ve gone through this program, what’s their life like? What their outlook for the future?

-Vanessa Chase Lockshin

# Story banking

*Storybank: a mechanism for capturing and sharing stories in a variety of media.*

- Written—by the person who knows the story
- Oral—a recording of them telling it, or notes to use when you write it up
- Photos
- Videos
- Quotable quotes

# Make your donor the hero of the story



Use your fundraising powers for good.

Tell the donor, “Because of you, this happened.

You are my hero.

And you are needed, now.”



## **Thank you! And a special offer**

If you've enjoyed today's webinar and you'd like to learn more, I'd like to give you a free copy of my *Quick Guide to Storytelling*. Email me! [dennis@twofisch.com](mailto:dennis@twofisch.com)

Questions?

# Stay in touch!

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