



## TOOL 18

# Tell Your Story

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### TIME COMMITMENT

2–4 hours

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### PEOPLE

Park organization staff

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### SUPPLIES

- Tell Your Story worksheet (included in this tool download)
- Theory of Change and Work Plan

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### INTRODUCTION

#### How do you convey the impact of your work?

**Sharing good stories is an opportunity to document what you have done and shape positive public perception of your organization.**

Good stories can help inspire trust, raise awareness, and connect others to your organization's equity-based work. Talking clearly about equitable impact can be challenging. This tool will help you amplify your progress, and draft strong messages that resonate with multiple audiences.



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### TIPS FOR USING THIS TOOL

- Storytelling is a craft that requires iteration, so write, write, write.
- Identify aha moments or takeaways in your equity-based work. Were there any big roadblocks? Were there lessons you didn't anticipate? Make a list of them and create a story ideas log. Good sources of inspiration are your initial Theory of Change and Create a Work Plan worksheets. These two tools may contain content to frame your key message. Your initial goal, resources and challenges, and outputs and outcomes will inform the story context.
- When drafting your story, keep sentences as short as possible. Use present tense.
- Acknowledge any concerns your target audience might have about your organization or impact. Being honest about successes and failures is important.
- Include different voices, such as quotes or comments from various stakeholders.
- Share story drafts with your team and ask for feedback.

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Identify your audience. Think about who you're trying to reach. You may have a few in mind: specific community stakeholders, elected officials, funders, or staff. Audiences will have different levels of connection to you and your organization.
2. Identify the benefits you're trying to communicate per each type of audience identified. What do they care about?
3. Establish a "hook" to draw the audience in. Common hooks are: a compelling personal anecdote, a thought-provoking quote, a pointed question (not a rhetorical one), or an interesting statistic that connects your general message, the audience(s), the benefit identified, and the story you'll develop.
4. Each story should include one to three key ideas that relate to the message you're trying to convey. Use your work plan as inspiration. What were highlights or lessons you learned along the way?
5. Now, start drafting a sample story. You can start with one paragraph.
6. To end your story, establish a call to action. Can you end with a bang?



**TELL YOUR STORY WORKSHEET**

MESSAGE/STORY	STORY SOURCE	TARGET AUDIENCE	DESIRED OUTCOME	VISUAL AIDS	STORY FEEDBACK
What is the message you're trying to convey?	Who is the source for your story?	Who are you trying to reach?	What is your intention with this story?	Will your story require any visual aids? If yes, what will they be?	What was your team's feedback?
MESSAGE 1					
MESSAGE 2					
MESSAGE 3					
MESSAGE 4					
MESSAGE 5					



## **TOOL 18**

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### **TELL YOUR STORY EXAMPLE 1**

Washington DC: 11th Street Bridge Park created videos to tell the story of their equitable development journey.

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### **WRITING CREDITS**

11th Street Bridge Park

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### **TELL YOUR STORY EXAMPLE 2**

New York: The High Line's newest communications approach is focusing on stories from the neighborhood.

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### **WRITING CREDITS**

High Line

1. **11th Street Bridge Park, Washington DC**  
Equity Resources and Tools
2. **High Line, New York, NY**  
Stories of the High Line's #MyLine Campaign