STORYTELLING FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

A manifesto for social change organizations
HOW STORYTELLING AFFECTS THE BRAIN

NEURAL COUPLING
A story activates parts in the brain that allows the listener to turn the story into their own ideas and experience thanks to a process called neural coupling.

MIRRORING
Listeners will not only experience the similar brain activity to each other, but also to the speaker.

DOPAMINE
The brain releases dopamine into the system when it experiences an emotionally charged event, making it easier to remember and with greater accuracy.

CORTEX ACTIVITY
When processing facts, two areas of the brain are activated (Broca’s and Wernicke’s area). A well-told story can engage many additional areas, including the motor cortex, sensory cortex and frontal cortex.
The stories we tell
CREATE
the world
WE LIVE IN.
I KNOW THERE IS A FOREST IN THERE SOMEWHERE...
“DATA MAKES PEOPLE THINK, EMOTIONS MAKE THEM ACT.”

ANTONIO DAMASIO
ETHOS
Credibility

PATHOS
Emotion

LOGOS
Logic
RAISE AWARENESS
MAKE A HURRICANE PLAN.

Hurricane Plan

- [x] Sign up for local alerts
- [x] Know my evacuation plan
- [x] Discuss the plan with family
- [x] Have copies of critical documents

FEMA
READY.GOV/HURRICANES
Story Telling

History → Words → Trust

Experience → Memory
3-PART STORYTELLING FRAMEWORK

- Grab attention.
- Elicit emotion.
- Inspire action.
The Hero's Journey

Return

(Grant of the Goddess)

Call to Adventure

Supernatural aid

Threshold Guardian(s)

Threshold (beginning of transformation)

Atonement

Mentor

Challenges and Temptations

Helper

Transformation

REVELATION

Abyss death & rebirth

Helper
Client ‘X’ was in a bad place. → The client met our organization. → Now the client is better.
ALABAMA WORKER
- Standard Hook Prosthesis
- Electronic Prosthesis w/ Movable Hand

includes-workers comp!

49K! $$$

GEORGIA WORKER
- Standard Hook Prosthesis
- Electronic Prosthesis w/ Movable Hand

includes-workers comp!

118K! $$$
“The Kibera School for Girls has helped me work towards my dream and potential. It has helped my family because they do not have to struggle to pay school fees.

I will pursue my dreams and become the world’s most famous lawyer. I will come back and give to the community.

I will empower young girls who have big ambitions just like me.”

- Christian, 8th grader
Muqueedah's Story: A New Beginning
Dear Future Mom

received an email from a future mom: “I’m expecting a baby with Down syndrome. I’m scared: what kind of life will my child have?” the mom’s fears explaining all the ways her child will enjoy a full and fulfilling life.

campaign (# I am Viral Video Chart).
"Beginning" - A Pencils of Promise Virtual Reality Film

BEGINNING
A VIRTUAL REALITY EXPERIENCE

PENCILS OF PROMISE
HI MY NAME'S SARAH McLACHLAN

I'M ABOUT TO RUIN YOUR DAY
“Hope sees the invisible, feels the intangible and achieves the impossible.”

— ANONYMOUS
"PEOPLE LIKE US DO THINGS LIKE THIS."

~ SETH GODIN
A Beautiful Past, and a Future for the Indonesian Forest Worth Fighting For

September 26, 2018  |  Waya Maweru

I am Waya Maweru. I am an Indonesian woman of Manado blood. With full awareness, I will stand to fight for the future of Indonesia’s forests.
"(The) creation of a shared identity between the individual and the cause over time."

~ DR SANDER VAN DER LINDEN
Don’t do this:
HEATHER'S STORY

How meals in every Arkansas county are changing the lives of those who live there.

By NO KID HUNGRY
CONTRIBUTED TO CAUSES, COMMUNITY & HUMANS
JULY 17TH, 2014
Imagine if you were homeless.
YOUR STORIES MAKE YOUR IDEAS REAL FOR YOUR AUDIENCE.
Connect

Slides, notes and resources