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Mastering Storytelling Fundamentals

Module 1 Handout

Defining your story strategy is the first step to getting started on your storytelling journey. This story strategy map will help you identify and structure your ideas into a compelling, memorable story that will resonate with your audience.

CHARACTER AND SETTING

1. Identify your narrator

Tip: It's important to identify your narrator and their point of view. Is the narrator part of the story, or are they telling the story from the outside? Is the narrator watching the story unfold, or reflecting on an event that has already taken place?

2. Identify the main character in your story

Tip: Think about the key character and their situation. Where are they? What are their main attributes and what do you want to audience to notice about them? The most powerful stories are told from the perspective of an individual.



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3. Identify the other characters in your story

Tip: Describe any other relevant characters. What do they bring to the story? What role do they play?

THE HERO'S JOURNEY

The hero's journey is a tried and tested model used to structure stories, particularly in the non-profit space. It is a proven formula based on years of research into powerful storytelling. For the purpose of this exercise, think about your organisation and how it started, using your Founder as "the hero" and their journey to starting the organisation. This will help you articulate your "why"; why you exist, why you do what you do, why people should support your cause.

[Here is an example](#) from Charity:Water, observe the way they have used "The Hero's Journey" story structure to connect people with their work.

4. The light-bulb moment. How were your main character's eyes opened to the cause?

Tip: Describe the moment when the person or your founder experienced an "eye-opening"

moment; when they witnessed something first-hand that changed their perspective.



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5. The doubts. What doubts or hesitations did they have prior to taking action?

Tip: A powerful way to convey these concerns is to express them in the voice of the main

character.

6. The solution. What idea, inspiration or change occurred that enabled the main character to come to a possible solution? What steps did they take towards this?

Tip: How did the main character come to realise the solution and the best approach? What

inspired this and what was their ultimate goal?

7. The obstacles. What challenges or obstacles did the characters encounter and how did they overcome these?

Tip: What allies joined? What role did they play in overcoming the obstacles?



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8. The action. What steps or action was taken?

Tip: Who was involved and what role did they play? Did they work together to achieve this outcome?

9. The breakthrough. What breakthrough occurred to enable the characters to overcome the hurdles?

Tip: What was the moment of truth?

10. The impact. What impact did this have on people's lives? How were their lives changed forever?

Tip: What is the tangible impact of the action? What lessons do you want the audience to remember from your story?



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11. The call to action. What actions do you want your audience to take to advance your cause?

Tip: What can people do to help if they've been moved by your story? What steps do you want them to take?