



WORKBOOK

storytelling for impact

Led by Professor John D. Trybus, Georgetown University
john@johntrybus.com | www.johntrybus.com

STORY ECOSYSTEM

clarify what story ecosystem you're working within and how you'd like it to evolve for the benefit of social impact before you create individual stories

1. CURRENT NARRATIVES & STORIES: What is currently out there about your work?

2. CATEGORIZE NARRATIVES & STORIES: Are these positive or negative ones to advance your work?

3. MISSING NARRATIVES & STORIES: Which ones need to be created or dialed up that are not currently to support your work?

PURPOSEFUL STORYTELLING

before creation, spend time defining a story's purpose

A. PASSION PROMPT

STEP 1: BRAINSTORM: Quickly jot down a few key priority project, programs or initiatives your organization or team has prioritized this year. When done, circle one that you'd like to create a story about.

B. STORY STRATEGY + PLAN OF ACTION

STEP 2: DETERMINE: What action do you want to drive for that priority project determined in the previous step? _____

STEP 3: STRATEGIZE: Who's the target audience(s) that you want to take that desired action? _____

STEP 4: CONSIDER: What emotion(s) is going to lead that audience to that particular action? _____

STEP 5: CHOOSE: Which channel(s) should this story be told on to reach the targeted audience? _____

STEP 6: EVALUATE: What does attainable success look like for your story?

C. STORY PURPOSE STATEMENT - PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

We plan to create a story about _____
(story about what priority project/program)

The purpose of this story is to _____ among
(action)
_____, through viewing/reading/hearing a story on
(target audience)

_____. The story will be considered successful if
(channel)

(evaluation method - remember, what's realistic for one story to do)

BUILDING BLOCK 1: CHARACTER

stories should contain a single, compelling main character

A. CHARACTER SELECTION

BRAINSTORM: List all potential characters who play a role in the story.

Think strategically about the purpose of the story. Categorize these characters as either main or supporting ones.

Main Character

Try to include only one main character.

1. PURPOSE: Knowing the purpose of your story why did you choose this character?

2. DESCRIPTION: What adjectives would you use to describe the character? Think about appearance, personality, and emotions.

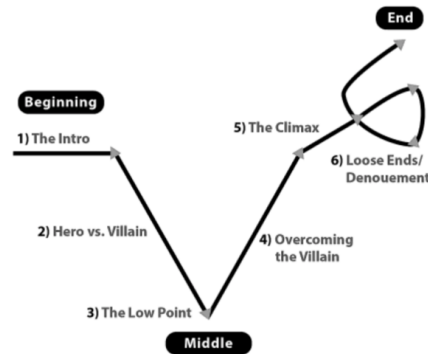
3. CHALLENGES: What setbacks, missteps or transformations did your character go through related to the topic? Make them human!

Supporting Characters

STORY STRUCTURE

once you've interviewed your character consider the story structure or narrative that is naturally occurring or that could be used to bring the story to life from the below examples

story structure



a few story types for your ecosystem



ordinary story: simply relates the realities of what you do as effectively as possible. Can enter into "content/information" category if not careful



innovative story: takes a story that has been latent in the population and brings new attention or a fresh twist to the story









counter story: goes in the face of "entrenched stories" to challenge prevailing norms in society, including within an organization



visionary story: a totally new story (often about a future that doesn't exist yet) that is not known in the mind's of most individuals; hard to execute but powerful

Inspired by: Howard Gardner | Leading Minds: An Anatomy of Leadership

consider narrative options

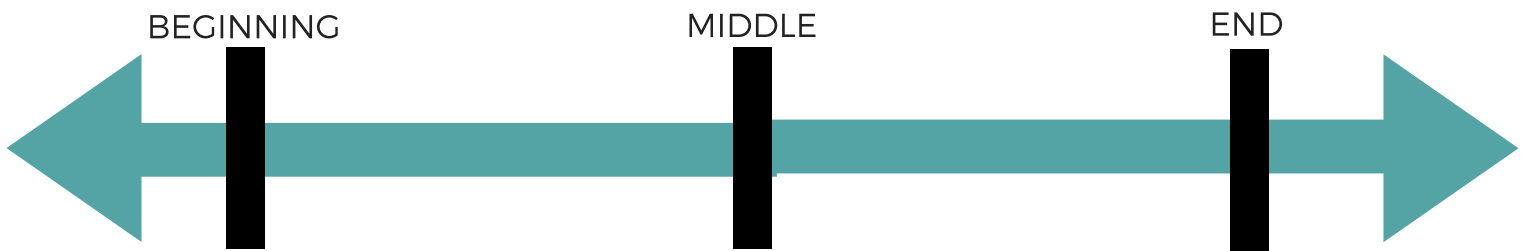
| HERO'S JOURNEY | PHOENIX RISING | PANDORA'S BOX | SHE PERSISTED | FOUNDING STORY | LOVE STORY |
|---|---|---|---|--|---|
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| hero learns of a great evil threatening the land and sets out to destroy it | a new life arises from the ashes of an old one, symbolizing renewal and possibility | unexpected trouble creates havoc but knowledge is gained in the process | even if the initial outcome may not be positive, refusing to be silent | tale of how and why an organization was founded, still human focused | why you do the work you do-beyond the paycheck-and love the mission |

BUILDING BLOCK 2: TRAJECTORY

stories should chronicle something that happened

A. TIMELINE

Using the arrow, create a chronological timeline of how the story unfolded in real life.



B. SEQUENCE

Remember stories don't have to be told chronologically as they unfolded in real life. Circle the sequence element(s) you will use to tell the story.

CHRONOLOGICALLY

BEGIN AT THE END

FLASHBACKS

FLASHFORWARDS

OTHER

C. MILESTONES

Determine how you will present what happens at the start, middle and end points of the story to make it interesting!

STARTING POINT:

MID-POINT:

ENDING POINT:

BUILDING BLOCK 3: AUTHENTICITY

stories should show the character's transformation using rich details

A. SETTING THE SCENE

Work to build authenticity by mapping out how the story will unfold.

| | STARTING POINT | MID-WAY POINT | ENDING POINT |
|---|---|---|---|
| Description <i>Describe the scene in two sentences or less</i> | | | |
| Visuals <i>What does the scene look like? Create a short list of how the story "looks," even if it is in written or audio form.</i> | | | |
| Emotions <i>Circle the emotion you intend your audience to experience within each scene, or write in one if not listed.</i> | JOY ANGER HAPPINESS WONDER FRUSTRATION EXCITEMENT GUILT SATISFACTION HOPEFUL SADNESS | JOY ANGER HAPPINESS WONDER FRUSTRATION EXCITEMENT GUILT SATISFACTION HOPEFUL SADNESS | JOY ANGER HAPPINESS WONDER FRUSTRATION EXCITEMENT GUILT SATISFACTION HOPEFUL SADNESS |

BUILDING BLOCK 4: EMOTIONS

stories should convey emotions that move people to act

A. EMOTION PLANNING

How do you want your target audience to ultimately feel at the end of the story? What emotion(s) will you strive to create?

B. CALL-TO-ACTION

What do you want your target audience to do after consuming the story? What's the call-to-action?

BUILDING BLOCK 5: HOOK

stories must capture the audience's attention in 10 seconds or less

A. CREATING THE HOOK

What will happen in the first 5-10 seconds of the story? Especially consider activating the senses or using humor in your hook.

NOTES & REFLECTIONS

THANK YOU!

stay in touch

Professor John D. Trybus
Georgetown University

john@johntrybus.com

*Kindly respect that this workbook is the intellectual property of Professor Trybus. It is for use by attendees of this event only and may not be reproduced, edited or shared without permission.