

# The Art of Storytelling

Why Facts & Figures Are Not Enough

**“We are hardwired to connect with others, it’s what gives purpose and meaning to our lives.”**

Brene Brown,  
Researcher, Social Worker, Storyteller, TED Talker

# Just the Facts

- Facts are data driven – Who, What, When, Where
- Facts demonstrate measurable outcomes
- Necessary for grant reports, college term papers and sportscasters... that's it!



# What is a Story?

- A story is a vehicle in which to transfer emotion from you to another person.



# Why Stories?

- Giving happens on an emotional level.
- Unlike other purchases, a donor does not receive a physical product.
- Stories become your currency to engage and motivate supporters.

**“There’s always room  
for a story that  
transports people to  
another place.”**

J.K. Rowling, Author

# Types of Stories

- Supporter Stories
- Impact Stories
- Thank You Stories



# Supporter Stories

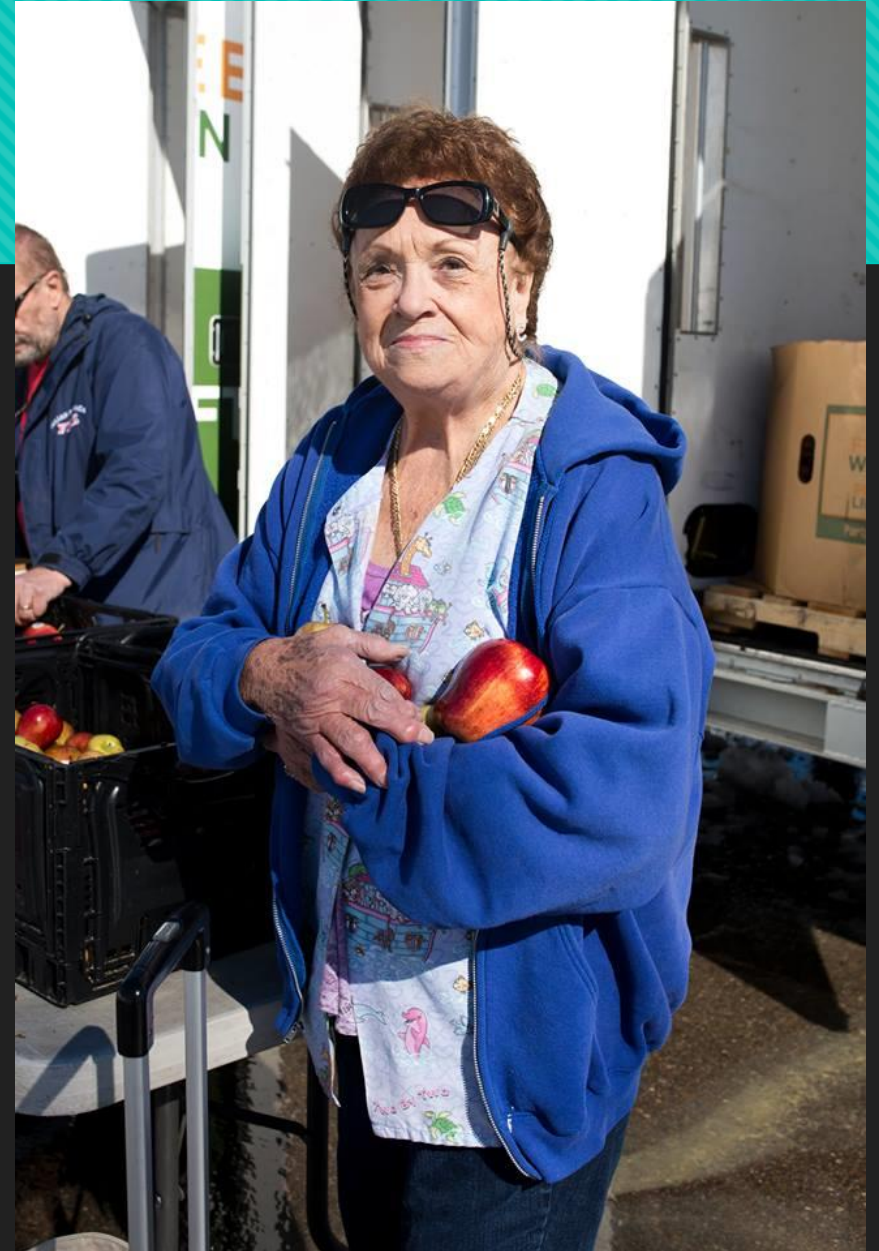
- Who is a supporter?
- Illustrate why your supporters give to your cause
- Gives others a way to see your organization through the eyes of a peer





# Impact Stories

- Effect of your organization on your clients, or the community
- Testimonials from clients



# Thank You Stories

- Impact stories that tell a donor you are thanking them for their gift.





**“In the end, we’ll all  
become stories.”**

- Margaret Atwood, Author, Poet

# Tale of Two Stories

- Our organization serves over 450 families each month in need of emergency food.

Today, we need your help to eradicate hunger in our community.

- “We have peanut butter at home, but no bread to put it on.”

A disabled mother of two, Kelly often skips a meal so that her kids can eat. When she arrived at the pantry this morning she was at her wit's end. Hungry. Stressed. Tired.

She left with food, including bread, and hope for tomorrow, and the days ahead.



# The Power of Stories

Build Empathy

Advance the Cause

Bridge the Knowledge Gap

Dispel Stereotypes

Demonstrate Impact to Supporters

Donors

Board of Directors

Partners

Staff

Volunteers

Media

Community Leaders



# Basic Storytelling Formula

- Introduce Main Character
- A Problem Arises
- Your Organization Intervenes
- Audience is Invited to Help

# Elements of Effective Stories

- Character
  - Relatable
  - Builds Empathy
- Conflict
  - Internal struggle
  - External circumstances
- Resolution
- Call to Action



# Make a Plan

- Set Goals
- Identify Opportunities
- Create a Calendar

**“The role of the storyteller is to awake the story in others.”**

- Jack Zipes, Fairy Tale Expert

# Ways to Share Stories

- Photos
- Videos
- Media Interviews
- Social Media
- Podcasts

- Public Speaking
- Blog posts
- Email/ Newsletter
- News articles
- On-site Tours

# Repetition is Key

- You don't always need a new story
- How many different ways can you re-use the same story?
- How many times can you re-use the same story?
- Stories are more effective when repeated.
  - Share the same story in different ways
  - Tell the same story months later
  - Use it as a "throw back"

**“The most powerful person in the world is the storyteller. The storyteller sets the vision, values and agenda of an entire generation that is to come.”**

Steve Jobs, Entrepreneur, Co-founder of Apple, Inc.

# How to Interview for the Best Stories

- Research and prepare questions in advance
- Find a comfortable, safe space
- Build rapport
- Set expectations
- Keep it conversational
- Photo/video release, when appropriate

# Questions to Ask

- Do you remember your first interaction with the food bank?
- What has surprised you the most about the food bank?
- What would you say to someone considering this program?
- What was it like before...?
- What does hunger mean to you?
- Is there anything else you think I should know?



# Worksheet Time

# Additional Resources

- [NonprofitStorytelling.com](https://NonprofitStorytelling.com)
- [TheStorytellingInNonprofit.com](https://TheStorytellingInNonprofit.com)
- [NonprofitStorytellingConference.com](https://NonprofitStorytellingConference.com)
- Adobe Spark
- Canva
- Erika Spence  
Mission Storyteller  
Second Harvest Food Bank of Central Florida  
  
[espence@feedhopenow.org](mailto:espence@feedhopenow.org)  
407-514-1073

**“After nourishment,  
shelter and  
companionship, stories  
are the thing we need  
most in the world.”**

- Phillip Pullman, Novelist