

**STEP 3: FINAL CHECK**

How many elements of good storytelling does your story have?

- Attention-getting beginning
- Hero your audience can relate to and respect
- Villain that represents a real problem you are trying to solve
- Vivid details that bring the story to life
- Evokes a specific emotion
- Conflict that creates tension
- One clear plot line
- A surprise or unexpected twist
- Does not hide or gloss over any critical moments of the story
- Ending where conflict is resolved
- A central lesson
- No soul-killing jargon
- Brevity—can you tell it in three minutes or less?
- Memorable—will it stick in the mind of your audience?
- Repeatable—will your messengers be able to re-tell it?

**STEP 1: GROUND YOUR STORY IN YOUR COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY**

What communications objective will this story support?

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Who is the target audience?

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What is the purpose of the story?

- Simplify the complex. *What do they need to understand?*  
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- Create an emotional connection. *What emotion will you evoke?*  
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- Build credibility. *How will they see your organization?*  
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- Other:  
\_\_\_\_\_

What kind of story do you need to tell to fulfill that purpose?

- Nature of our challenge
- How we got started
- Performance
- Where we are going
- Emblematic success
- Striving to improve

Which of your messages will the story reinforce?

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What is the lesson of the story that will help move your audience to action?

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## STEP 2: BUILD YOUR STORY

### THE CHARACTERS

Who or what is the hero?

- Is your hero a person?  
If not, what is it?
- Name your hero.
- Describe your hero with vivid details.

Who or what is the villain?

- Is your villain a person?  
If not, what is it?
- Name your villain.
- Describe your villain with vivid details.

### THE PLOT

Where's the conflict?

- Why are your hero and villain in conflict?
- What obstacles must the hero overcome?
- What's at stake for your hero?

What major developments carry the story forward from beginning to end?

Summarize your story in one sentence that includes your big lesson.

*Ex. Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer. This is the story of a shiny-nosed reindeer who was banned from reindeer games, ran away from home and eventually realized that his difference was actually his greatest strength.*

### THE STRUCTURE

Once upon a time...

- How will you get their attention from the start?
- Introduce your hero.
- Set the scene.

And then what happened?

- How does the conflict build?
- Describe how with vivid details.

And then what happened?

- How does the conflict build?
- Describe how with vivid details.

And finally what happened to resolve the conflict?

- How is the conflict solved?
- What's the result?

Why does it matter?

- What lesson should your audience take away?
- Link it to your ask.