Telling stories to inspire action

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Before we get started

• Chat box

• We plan two break out room chances for you to reflect on the ideas
What I do and why I do it

• Initially as a fundraiser I had big targets, I worked hard, and yet often it didn’t work!!
• Fundraisers work incredibly hard, and they deserve to get access to tried and tested strategies
• I’ve repeatedly found there are BETTER WAYS OF RAISING MONEY than 95% of people are aware of
You’re in the **wrong** place if...

- You want to just hear some interesting stories but don’t plan to try out any of the ideas

- You believe that all the things that make fundraising hard are beyond your control
You’re in the **right** place if

• You’d rather **take responsibility and make decisions** about how you approach your work

• You’re on the look out for **things to DO**.

*(My advice is only write down ACTIONS today).*
Thank you for sharing some challenges you’d like to cover

1. What messages to prioritise?
2. Finding real ‘cuddly’ examples is hard / impossible
3. How do you help people care when your work is complex / scientific?
4. What if there are no people, or people are not the point?
5. How to help colleagues see value in a more story-focused approach
6. Avoiding doom and gloom / sense that its hopeless
What I’ll cover

1) **Why** real examples are so powerful if we want to increase fundraising income

2) **10 techniques** to improve your results using more real examples / stories

(For digital story-telling ideas – see the first webinar)
The Curse of Knowledge
The antidote?

‘To defeat the Curse of Knowledge, include more real examples and stories’
Max Newton, British Red Cross

‘Our North and Midlands teams have used these story techniques to inspire our supporters and for the last three years we’ve raised double the amount raised by the other teams...’
Being able to convey what you mean **through an example** makes a big difference:

Why do examples / stories help you influence?
Why do stories help you influence?

- Evidence
- Memorable
- Simplify. They make the complex easy to understand
- Help people feel as well as think
We connect emotionally to the specific

The Rokia Experiment
We connect emotionally to the specific

• Version 1 – Big picture, statistics showing human plight

• Version 2 – Focused on one individual’s situation
We connect emotionally
to the specific

• Version 1 – Big picture situation, statistics – average of $1.14 donated
• Version 1 – Big picture situation, statistics – average of $1.14 donated

• Version 2 – Focused on individual situation – average of $2.38 donated
We connect emotionally to the specific
Telling stories to inspire action

Jennifer Few
Individual Giving Officer
Our work is complex but our messages need to be simple
Yorkshire Wildlife Trust

Heroes

Small tortoiseshell butterfly
Striking orange and black wings adorned with crystal gems: the small tortoiseshell butterfly is easily recognisable. Dancing from flower...

Swift
The swift is a fast-flying and distinctive bird with long, curved wings: black all over, with a small, pale patch on its throat.

Hedgehog
The hedgehog is a night time visitor that gardeners adore! As our only spiny animal, most of us would immediately recognise a hedgehog....

Common pipistrelle bat
One of the commonest and most widespread British bats, and also one of the smallest, weighing just 5g (the same as a 20p piece!)

Common frog
In spring, calm, quiet evenings are interrupted by the croaking call of male frogs romancing females. Love is in the air, or actually....

Garden bumblebee
Close your eyes and imagine a bumblebee - you can't picture them without a fantastic flower to buzz around and neither can they...

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Listen to colleagues
Think about the whole organisation
Communicate your choices
Carly, City of Trees
4 partnerships since March 2020
Technique 3 - Search out the different angles that your supporters care about

1. Habitat / species
2. Climate change
3. People
(also WWF 4 motivation model)

Michael Clift, RSPB
Compacted earth!
Habitat / species result

- Butterfly count up 200%
- Bird count up 1,700%
Habitat / species result

- Butterfly count up 200%
- Bird count up 1,700%

People result

- Crop yields have increased too
- Nearly every nearby farm has become nature-friendly too
The Law of contrast
For effective fundraising, seek out these **two** kinds of example

A) Examples of the problem.
*There is a problem I care about.*

B) Examples of impact.
*I believe your solution is able to solve it*
Technique 4 – For full length stories, this structure is most persuasive

• Who / what
• Problem
• Action
• Result
Technique 4 – For full length stories, this structure is most persuasive

• Who / what
• Problem
• Action
• ?????????? (ie ‘We do stuff. I’ve got no idea whether it makes any difference whatsoever’)
• Who / what
• Problem
• Action
• Result
Technique 5...
Received gift of £100,000.

‘It was really clear. The point I could tell she decided to make a gift was when I was giving the real examples...’

Stu Thomson
Technique 5 – One sentence examples
/ find the Big Fat Claims

Find the essence!!

The 7/3/1 technique
Amnesty fundraiser said

*Sapardurdy Khadzhiev* just released in Turkmenistan

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Ospreys in Scotland;
Red kites in UK
Technique 6 – Ask for your supporters’ stories

Neil, Earthwatch
• 650 letters offering chance to share your story
• 100 said YES.
• 80 calls so far.
• For 50th Anniversary
  - One story to share / week
  - A book
Technique 7 – Include them in thank you emails and letters
From Becky’s email...

...We also have communication therapy groups, for those who suffer from aphasia – the most incredible thing I’ve seen in one of these groups was a gentleman from Maidstone who wanted to give a speech at his daughter’s wedding but after his stroke, he could only say ‘yes’ ‘no’ and ‘please’ (he now jokes that wasn’t going to make a great speech!). He practiced and practiced for 12 weeks with us, and in his final session before the wedding was able to deliver a 52-word speech to the group, and went on to deliver the same speech at his daughter’s wedding – not a dry eye in the house.
Hi Becky,

Thanks for your lovely e-mail.

Just read it sitting outside the clinic waiting to go in for my physio and had a little cry about the gentleman at his daughters wedding !!!

I’ve just made a bank transfer of £1000.00 as your email has made me feel so thankful for the support you give.
Technique 7 – Include examples in thank you emails

• £500 doubled to £1000.
• Since had 3 x £1000 donations from her.

‘Regional income in my patch increased by 210% in 14 months. It works!’
Technique 8 – Brainstorm more opportunities to tell stories

• In Episodes 13 and 20 we explore how Lynda increased the number of stories she tells
• Webinars; and business card
Technique 9 – Create your own story bank
If you knew you could find, capture and share more real examples and stories, what could you do?

1) Get your own story notebook
2) Share some ideas from this webinar
3) Story-sharing slot in team meetings
4) Set up / improve existing story bank
5) Set up conversation with ..........colleague
5) Talk to ..........supporter
6) Google search
7) ......................
Download my e-book, *Power through the Pandemic* for FREE here:

[www.brightspotfundraising.co.uk/power](http://www.brightspotfundraising.co.uk/power)
A few months ago Michael received an enquiry
Lundy seabird populations soar

Rod Minchin | 28th May 2019
The result...
The Magic Formula to frame a persuasive case

A) What is the essence of the problem and the consequences of that problem?
B) What’s not obvious about the problem?
C) What specific example helps us understand the problem?
   
   A) What story / example shows your solution works?
   B) How could you show that it works using numbers?
   C) The psychology of influence – what authority or social proof could you use to help reassure?
   D) Briefly explain your solution. Special ingredient?
The Magic Formula to frame a persuasive case

EVOKE A PROBLEM THEY CARE ABOUT

A) What is the essence of the problem and the consequences of that problem?
Tristan albatross exclusively nests there in danger of extinction, due to attacks by mice. Only UK Critically Endangered bird

B) What’s not obvious about the problem?
Mice not indigenous – arrived with sealers, so birds have no evolved defense mechanism – just sit there – eaten alive.

C) What specific example helps us understand the problem?
Even seen footage of mice attacking adult birds.

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The Magic Formula to frame a persuasive case

CONVEY IMPACT - HELP THEM BE REASSURED YOUR SOLUTION WORKS

A) What story / example shows your solution works?
South Georgia Island – rat free in 2018 – albatross population increased.

B) How could you show that it works using numbers?
Lundy Island – rat-free in 2006 – bird numbers tripled since then.

C) The psychology of influence – what authority or social proof could you use to help reassure?
Authority – use of experts from New Zealand; ‘As reported in The Ecologist…’
Social Proof – Funding from UK and South African governments

D) Briefly explain your solution. Special ingredient?
As a last resort – rodenticide. During non breeding season.
C) Psychology of influence - Authority

Lundy seabird populations soar

Rod Minchin | 28th May 2019
C) Psychology of influence – Social Proof

- Funding from UK and South African governments
A) **Problem** – governments make decisions without speaking to environmental experts / using data – consequences are habitats get destroyed.

B) **Help me believe your solution works** – Argentinian environment minister requested data / help. Ministers for commerce and mining now make use of their data and advice to improve decisions.
The Magic Formula to frame a persuasive case

EVOKE PROBLEM
A) What is the essence of the problem and the consequences of that problem?
B) What’s not obvious about the problem?
C) What specific example helps us understand the problem?

CONVEY IMPACT – REASSURE YOUR SOLUTION WORKS
A) What story / example shows your solution works?
B) How could you show that it works using numbers?
C) The psychology of influence – what authority or social proof could you use to help reassure?
D) Briefly explain your solution. Special ingredient?
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Photo credit: Dom Hinchley

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What ideas have you had today?

1) Option of ‘hero species’ focus
2) Work hard to understand colleagues and help them see the value
3) Search out different angles
4) The story arc structure to maximise impact
5) Find the essence – one sentence examples
6) Seek your supporters’ stories
7) Include them in thank you letters and emails
8) Build your own story bank
9) Brainstorm more opportunities to share them
10) Try the Magic Formula to create a persuasive case
Ideas to build momentum

1) Please fill in the feedback form.

2) Make use of the resource pack.

3) Taking these ideas deeper:
   - Corporate Partnerships Mastery
   - Major Gifts Mastery Programmes
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