The Art of Storytelling
What is your favorite story?
Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, you will be able to:

• Articulate the value of using stories and storytelling for knowledge management
• Understand qualities of an effective story
• Conduct & record an interview
• Take compelling photos
• Identify opportunities to capture stories or use storytelling in your work
Why tell stories?

"By the time we arrived, more than 20 nurses had died from Ebola."
Why tell stories?

Stories are...

• Memorable
• Persuasive
• Engaging
Example: Family Planning Voices

Personal responses to a global responsibility

#FPVoices

This material is part of the Knowledge Management Training Package, made possible by the support of the American People through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and created by the Knowledge for Health (K4Health) Project under Cooperative Agreement #AID-OAA-A-13-00068 with the Johns Hopkins University. The contents of this material may be adapted and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID, the U.S. Government, or the Johns Hopkins University. The original material can be found on www.kmtraining.org.
Example: Family Planning Voices

Menstruation is a big issue that people often do not talk about. I heard a story of a girl in Mukono district in Uganda who said she in order not to buy pads, she preferred to get pregnant. That hit me badly. When you’re pregnant, you’re not menstruating, so it’s like you’re saving money for the nine months instead of buying pads every month.

Dianahritah Amse, Project Officer
Public Health Ambassadors Uganda
Uganda
Family Planning Voices: Impact

On knowledge, attitudes, & self efficacy

• Provided me with info that was new to me  73%
• Provided me with info that changed my views, opinions, or beliefs  61%
• Gave me more confidence to discuss issues related to FP  84%
• Inspired and/or motivated me  94%
Family Planning Voices: Impact

On knowledge application & collaboration

- Provided me with a new idea or way of thinking 85%
- Led me to focus on a new FP topic 68%
- Encouraged me to start a new activity regarding FP 65%
- Prompted me to collaborate with FP professionals outside of my organization 74%
What makes a story resonate?

“I was married when I was very young. I used to sell milk to get food and sleep in the forest because I don't have a place to sleep. Society should stop bad practices because what I have been through was so hard for me. After my education, I would like to be a nurse so that I can help other girls like me.”

Modestar/Too Young To Wed/Samburu Girls Foundation

Source: https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2016/10/08/491797689/a-photographer-gives-cameras-to-child-brides-their-images-are-amazing
Telling stories that resonate

- Stay simple & focused
- Get personal
- Be relatable
- Keep it social-media friendly
- Use multimedia approaches
- Show, don’t tell
Telling stories that resonate

• Context/setting
• Character
• Conflict
• Turning point
• Call to action

A group of women dairy producers from Abdullahpur, Bangladesh. ©2011 Akram Ali, Courtesy of Photoshare
Example: #PHEVoices
Common Storytelling Pitfalls

• Too complex
• Too simplistic
• Inauthentic
• Inaccurate
• Harmful stereotypes or messaging
• No call to action
• Unethical storytelling
Ethical Storytelling: Protect & Respect

- Consent
- Respect for personal boundaries & cultural norms
- Review & approval
- Honesty & accuracy

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Story Element #1: The Art of the Interview

Five tips for an effective interview:

➢ Choose hardware and software
➢ Ask good questions
➢ Listen well
➢ Use an interpreter or translator if needed
➢ Transcribe
Choose hardware & software

Hardware
• Mobile phone
• Hand-held microphone & tripod or lapel microphones
• Ear buds/headphones

Software
• Voice Record Pro
• Google Drive or Dropbox
Ask good questions

• “Tell me about…”
• “Describe the moment you realized…”
• “How did that make you feel?”
• Is there anything else that you’d like to share with me?
Listen well

Five things good listeners do:

• Pay attention
• Use body language
• Give feedback
• Be patient
• Show respect

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Use an interpreter or translator if needed
Transcribe: To put thoughts, speech, or data into written or printed form

- KISS (Keep it short and sweet!)
- Transcribe audio content word-for-word.
- Apps or software can help.
- Transcribe key passages only.
- Edit to polish, but don’t change meaning.
Story Element #2: The Art of Photography

Five keys to effective photography:

➢ Background
➢ Light
➢ Perspective
➢ Engagement
➢ Quantity

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Background
Light

A center in Mumbai, India helps children of sex workers. © 2002 Vijay Sureshkumar, Courtesy of Photoshare
Perspective

Residents of the Khamsadegaig camp for internally displaced families in West Darfur, Sudan. © 2007 Paul Jeffrey, Courtesy of Photoshare
Engagement
Quantity (Shoot more!)

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Understanding Your Audience

• Who is your target audience?
  • Age range
  • Gender
  • Geographical context
  • Social, cultural, religious context
  • Level of education
  • Access to technology

• What channels do they use to access information?

• How much time and space do they have to digest your content?
Understanding Your Audience

• What does your audience already know about the issue?

• What additional knowledge do you want them to have?

• What do you want them to do as a result of the information you provide?
Deciding how to tell your story

Always start with a creative brief.
• Audience
• Call to action
• Barriers between audience and call to action
• Benefits for audience of acting
• Key messages: reasons why benefits outweigh barriers
• Tone
• Media/format
• Creative considerations
Deciding how to tell your story

- Logistical considerations
- Financial resources
- Human resources
- Equipment
- Software
- Time frame for production
- Geographical context
- Storytelling platform
- Technological capacity of audience
Story Formats

- Social media content
- Photo essay
- Video
- Blog post
- Article
- Case study
- Data visualization
- Longform story
Example: Flash Mob
Storytelling Tools

• Family Planning Voices Storytelling Toolkit (https://www.k4health.org/sites/default/files/fp_voices_storytelling_toolkit.pdf)

• FP INFOcus Guide (https://healthcommcapacity.org/hc3resources/fp-infocus-guide/)

• Web Writing for Beginners (https://www.k4health.org/resources/web-writing-beginners-top-ten-tips-handout)

• Thinking of Making a Whiteboard Animation? Read This First! (https://medium.com/the-exchange-k4health/thinking-of-making-a-whiteboard-animation-read-this-first-1cdce288531e)