

***Video Storytelling Tips to Consider***

When thinking about how to tell your organization’s story, there are several key considerations to keep in mind:   
  
***What do you want people to know?***

When pondering what you want people to know, it is important to note any myths or misperceptions about your organization or the field that you are in that should be addressed. For example, are there particular FAQs that make sense to tackle head on? Has your organization’s identity ever been confused with another’s? If yes, why? Being proactive, instead of reactive, about clearing up confusion is crucial.

***What do you want people to feel?***

There is a wide range of emotions that people could feel when learning about your organization’s mission. Do you want people to feel outraged? Inspired? Ideally you want people to be motivated to respond to some call-to-action. Being mindful of matching what you want people to feel with what you want them to do is important.

***What do you want people to do?***

Unfortunately many organizations tell their story in a compelling way, yet they leave their audience hanging, uncertain as to best the way to get involved. Are you looking to boost your volunteer pool? Are you trying to attract more donors? Creating clear and measurable calls-to-action is often an overlooked step, but this can be easily remedied with better strategic planning in the early stages of crafting your story.

***A Few Pitfalls to Avoid***

***1) Try to avoid putting too much into one video.***

It is better to create a library of short video assets (ideally under 2 minutes), instead of longer videos. By trying to cram too many voices in one video, you run the risk of diluting your key messages, or worse yet, having viewers lose interest and cut out of the video before watching it in its entirety. Too often, people feel that they have to share every feature and benefit of their services, when in reality, a lot of that information would be better suited as text on a website.

***2) Try to avoid having the usual suspects in your videos.***

It may be tempting to have your typical “go to” representatives, like your Executive Director or board members, be the primary people in your videos. Although they certainly have a role that they can play, remember that your videos aren’t about spokespeople – they are about storytellers. Think more broadly about the people who are connected to your organization and how they can contribute to your videos. A long-standing volunteer? A loyal member? Someone from a partner organization? See if there are people within your community whose stories you can tap to create that emotional appeal.

***3) Try to avoid telling. Focus on showing instead.***

When planning for a film shoot, people often focus on getting interviews and don’t spend enough time getting b-roll (e.g., photos or the non-talking head video footage of people). Use talking heads sparingly. Strategically capture additional footage of people engaged in activities that will enrich the stories you want to share.

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