
“Crafting Stories to Win the Hearts, Minds, and VOTES of Lawmakers”

Worksheet Exercise

Elements of Great Advocacy Story-Telling

Begin with the End in Mind

- The advocate knows what the “ask” is, and the legislators desired reaction.

What is Your Goal?

1. “The Opening “ – Set the Stage and Establish the Stakes

- Establish context for the life you’re about to describe.
- Begin the story, thinking about the first sentence.

Possible Sentence to Complete: “The best/worst thing that happened was...”

2. “Paint the Picture” – Details and the Senses

- What did you see, hear, touch, taste, smell?
- Make it real. Be practical, specific, and graphic – don’t hold ANYTHING back!

Possible Sentence to Complete: “I could (hear/feel/touch)...”

3. “The Struggle” – Describe the Fight

- Identify the conflict.
- Struggles are mental, philosophical, emotional, physical – even personally internal.
- Play the underdog – turn weakness into strength.

Possible Sentence to Complete: “We didn’t know it would be this hard. We were up against...”

4. “Discovery” – Always Surprise the Legislator

- Don’t give away everything up front or until it has the most impact.
- Try to balance the past and the present. How what you learned then can impact what happens now or in the future.

Possible Sentence to Complete: “And we learned that...”

5. “We Can Win!” – Introduce the Potential of Success & Joy

- Success – Our hero wins
- Comfort/Joy – Our audience participates

Possible Sentence to Complete: “Because of that we...”

6. “The Button” – Finish with a Hook

- Have your ending sentence clearly memorized and know when to use it.
- Exercise restraint.

Possible Sentence to Complete: ... *(Sorry...no sentence to finish here – you finish the story!)*