

HOW TO TELL YOUR STORY FOR ADVOCACY

Storytelling for advocacy is the art of translating values and experience into action.

Each of us has a story that can move others to action. As you learn this skill, you will be learning to tell a story about yourself, your community, and your strategy that motivates others to join you in creating change.

WHY TELL YOUR STORY?

- **Effective Advocacy:** stories foster connection between people, help them understand an issue, and motivate people to become advocates.
- **Individual Empowerment:** storytelling recognizes and elevates your expertise as someone who has direct experience with an issue.
- **Influence Public Narratives:** storytelling ensures that there is a diversity of voices in public debates. Stories can also combat negative rhetoric and stereotypes.
- **“Stats Tell; Stories Sell”:** Policymakers respond to a combination of data with a creative, human narrative that resonates with the wider public.

PRO TIPS FOR STORYTELLING:

- **Situate your story in the context of the larger issue.**
- **Keep your story tightly focused and avoid tangents.**
- **Tailor your story to your audience.**
- **Motivate your audience with hope.**

HOW TO CRAFT YOUR STORY

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1. What is the issue I want to address?
2. What is the purpose of my presentation? Do I want to persuade, inform, etc.?
3. What powerful examples do I have that I am willing to share?
4. What creative wording or “hook” will I use to get my audience’s attention?
5. What outcome would I like from my audience?
6. What is my call to action?
7. How will I close?

Once you have crafted your story and feel comfortable with your answers to the questions above, practice telling your story out loud!

Practice by yourself at first if you need to, but it is also important to get feedback as you become more comfortable. Ask a few trusted friends or colleagues to listen to your story to offer constructive feedback. The ACLU of Iowa Advocacy and Community Engagement team is also willing to do this! Reach out to us at outreach@aclu-ia.org to set up a meeting.

CONTACT US!

HAVE A QUESTION?

Email us at outreach@aclu-ia.org.

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