

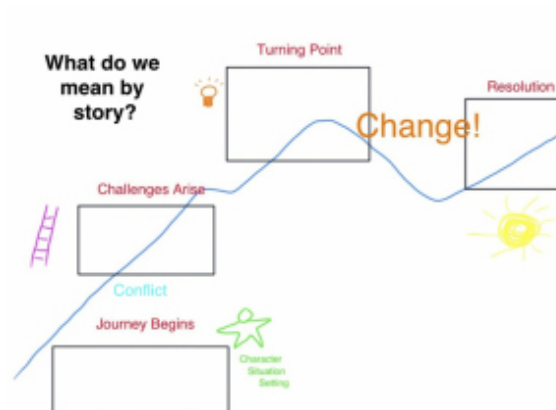
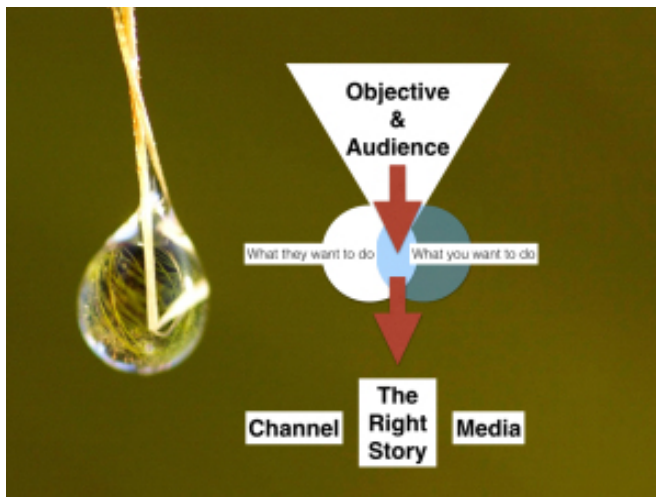
The Website as Story Space Workshop

Barbara Ganley for VCF/Ben & Jerry's Foundation

1. Welcome/Intro

2. **Story Circles** One-minute stories. Tell us about an experience when you felt compelled/inspired/called to action or a moment when you needed help. Do not explain the story, bring us to the moment itself. Prep: first line & last

3. Quick review of nonprofit storytelling: Why & Who & How & When & Where



4. What does your website have to do with story? A Look at [Town Hall Theater](#) [Books to Prisoners](#) & [Vermont Works for Women](#)

What unique story can your website tell? How are design, voice, focus used to tell the over-arching, most pressing story? Is the story making us think, touching our heart, bringing us closer, inspiring us to act?



5. *Touring Nonprofit Websites Part One, Homepages*

a. In your small groups, take a tour of the homepages listed for your group (five minutes per homepage). What story does it tell, specific question does it answer? How? What voice/personality is conveyed? Who is the intended audience? How can you tell? What action does the homepage wish the audience to take? Is the homepage compelling/effective?

Group One: [Miriam's Kitchen](#) [Alameda County Community Foodbank](#) [Sightline Institute](#)

Group Two: [No Kid Hungry](#) [Mistakes Kids Make](#) [Break It Down](#) [Crisis Clinic](#)

Group Three: [Hillside](#) [Big City Mountaineers](#) [Mission Asset Fund](#) [Seattle Parks Foundation](#)

Group Four: [The Telling Room](#) [Children of Shelters](#) [Malaria No More](#)

Group Five: [Girl Effect](#) [Names for Change](#) [Missing Kids Stamps](#)

Group Six: [New York Peace Institute](#) [Empower Generation](#) [Rocky Mountain Seed Alliance](#)

Group Seven: [Earthlinks](#) [Agrarian Trust](#) [Clean Up the River Environment](#)

Group Eight: [Latino Community Fund](#) [Within Reach WA](#) [Dignity for Divas](#)

b. Take your group to your homepage and do the same. (five minutes/per website)

c. Individual reflections: Come up with a metaphor for the story your org. homepage tells. Jot down observations/feedback/ideas about your homepage story.

d. Full-group sharing of 4 -5 of your home pages.

6. Discussion: Inside the Website, the Small Story(ies)

What's their role? Where do they most effectively reside? What sorts of stories are told? What media is used? How successfully? Look at Call-to-Action pages for stories (efficacy/social proof), Project pages, Stories pages.



Small Stories Tell of...

- Overcoming Adversity
- Solving a Problem
- Making a Connection
- Recalling the Origin
- Celebrating an Event, Accomplishment, Milestone
- Looking to the Future



7. *The Hunt for Effective Use of Small Stories*

In your small group, choose one of the websites (from the assigned websites, Exercise #5 and then your own) and find examples of small stories well told. Where does the story appear? How does it connect to mission/goal/audience? What frames and contextualizes the story? What makes it compelling? What media is used and to what effect? What else do you notice? Be ready to present one small story done particularly well, and one story that does not quite hold up.

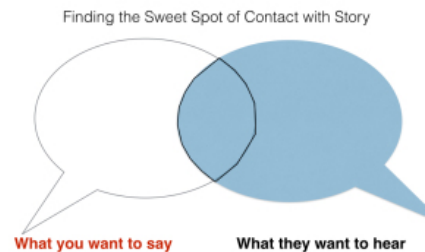
BREAK

8. *Story Audit*

- List stories your organization has already gathered (one per sticky note).
- Take Stock. Where do these stories reside right now? Where might they appear to better effect? Which stories can/should be featured? Where? Have you used appropriate media? Are you missing opportunities to share these stories? Which stories are missing from your catalogue? Where might you find them? Who can help you?

9. *Audience Personas*

Using [Big Duck's Form](#), come up with audience persona(s). Which stories from the audit would you tell these personas? What will you need to change about your story(ies)?



◀ BACK TO BLOG

1. Make a list of the top three key audience groups that you want to reach through your communications.
2. For each of those groups, think of two actual people who might be a part of your audience. They might be imaginary, but it's generally most useful to base it on a real person who's connected to your organization. (In fact, if you can, you may even want to interview that person and build the profile around their answers.)
3. Give each person a name and note key facts about their background and who they are (e.g. age, gender, race/ethnicity, location, employment, education, interests, preferred ways to communicate, etc.).
4. For each person, answer the following questions: how did she find or connect with us? What is she looking for from us? What are we looking for from her?
5. Write up your personas, one per page, and give each one a photo. Share the document with key communicators at your organization.
6. Keep those personas nearby--you may even want to hang a shortened version up on the wall near your computer. As you write and create and plan, use them to check yourself: am I thinking about what matters to Julie? Have I considered whether this piece is really relevant for Sam?

10. *Five Small Stories Exercise*



a. Jot down the titles/snapshots of five small stories you can tell right now (that you have not already told or need some changes), one each to meet the following goals: **to inspire/move to action, to connect, to celebrate/thank, to share information, to learn from the past**. Who is your intended audience for each? What question does each story answer? What will your audience take away from each story? What goal will the story help you meet? How will you tag these stories for easy access and effective archiving?

b. Share your "best" story with your group and give each other feedback.

c. Full group: Share 3 or 4 of these stories.



11. Discussion: Social Media Stories & Your Website

The intersection of email, blogs, Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, Instagram etc with and through your website.

12. *Your Website Storytelling Strategy: Four Small Steps, Four Big*

- a. In one sentence, write what you think website storytelling can do for your organization.
- b. List 4 steps you can take right away.
- c. List 4 steps to take over the next six months.
- d. What has to happen for your plan to succeed?

Do refer to the sheets in the hand-out from Visser & Richardson (links below)

13. The Workshop Story

Useful Resources

Barbara & Community Expressions: Contact at bgblogging@gmail.com Twitter @bgblogging

There are no slides for this workshop: we'll refer to [slide decks](#) from other storytelling workshops as we review the power and process of nonprofit storytelling but work from this page to explore the role of the website in inspiring, teaching, learning, acting & connecting through stories.

[All Spring 2014 Storytelling Workshop Resources](http://community-expressions.com/2014-vcfben-jerrys-storytelling-workshops/): <http://community-expressions.com/2014-vcfben-jerrys-storytelling-workshops/>

[Big Duck's Flowchart for Rethinking Your Website](#) ([Big Duck](#), in general, has very useful free webinars and posts/tweets including [this one on creating audience personas](#) -- we'll do this in the workshop, specifically aimed at storytelling)

[How People Read Online](#) (Some great graphs showing how far people will scroll)

[DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT IN CULTURE, HERITAGE AND THE ARTS](#) Jasper Visser / Jim Richardson (fantastic resource I've used here--generous CC license and takes you right through a sound process for a digital engagement process, even if you are not in the arts)

Much as I am skeptical of any post/article with a title...The 16 Whatevers you need to know...this one is useful: [Developing a Storytelling Culture: 16 Questions to Ask Yourself](#)

