

WHEN A STORY BECOMES A FUNDRAISING TOOL

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**Domestic violence organizations face a
unique storytelling challenge.**

**THE POWER OF
STORYTELLING**

Use of Videos

- Stories make an organization's mission personal and tangible
- Videos can create an emotional connection that statistics alone can't
- Stories help humanize a cause
- A well-told story can help donors understand why the work matters

Two Approaches

WHAT MAKES A STORY POWERFUL?

The Traditional Approach

- What happened to the survivor
- Details of the abuse
- Crisis and trauma
- “Look how bad the situation was”

A Survivor-Centered Approach

- What changed
- What the person accomplished
- Hope and resilience
- What safety looks like
- The role your organization played

WHAT MAKES A STORY
POWERFUL?

The most compelling part of someone's story doesn't have to be the worst thing that's ever happened to them.

Just Because We Can, Doesn't Mean We Should

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Does the client understand where the video will appear and how widely it will be shared?
- Could participation create a safety risk?
- Is the person in a position where they might feel obligated to say yes?

Just Because We Can, Doesn't Mean We Should

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

- What happens if they change their mind later?
- Are we asking someone to relive trauma for our fundraising purposes?
- Whose needs are driving the story—the client's or the organization's?

Some Alternatives

- Anonymous/voice-over stories
- Staff telling the story
- Animation
- Symbolic footage

**ETHICAL
CONSIDERATIONS**

Storytelling is a Team Effort

- Everyone in the organization is a storyteller
- Build systems that allow staff to recognize and share potential stories as they happen
- Help employees recognize moments of change, connection, resilience, and impact

**CREATE A CULTURE OF
STORYTELLING**

Storytelling is a Team Effort

- Create collaboration between program staff, communications, and development
- Build storytelling into regular team conversations
- Collect and document stories throughout the year

**CREATE A CULTURE OF
STORYTELLING**

A culture of storytelling isn't about collecting stories. It's about learning to recognize impact.

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DVSSP

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**DON'T WAIT UNTIL IT'S
TIME FOR YOUR APPEAL
TO ENGAGE YOUR
AUDIENCE**

Contact me!

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